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A COMMENTARY UPON BROWNING'S

THE RING AND THE BOOK

A COMMENTARY UPON BROWNING'S *THE RING AND THE BOOK*

BY

A. K. COOK

'with the life his life might give
These lived again, and yet shall live'
WILLIAM MORRIS

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Dedicated

TO THE GENIUS OF

ROBERT BROWNING

ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE COMPLETED PUBLICATION OF

THE RING AND THE BOOK

FEBRUARY 1, 1919

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PREFACE

In the following pages an attempt is made to discharge the two necessary and some of the more or less optional functions of a commentator upon such a poem as *The Ring and the Book*. The necessary functions are, firstly, the explanation and illustration of the poet's thought and language when either is not clear, and, secondly, the explanation of what may be comprehensively called his allusions; among the miscellaneous optional functions here undertaken are literary appreciation and source-study.

I. Answering a letter, written in 1855, in which Ruskin seems to have spoken of his regret at the poet's obscurity and of his delight in his profundity, Browning expressed a hope that the 'deepnesses' which his correspondent thought he had found in his work were more than 'mere blacknesses'. In *The Ring and the Book* there are deepnesses enough, and (though they are happily far fewer, in proportion to its length, than in most of Browning's longer poems) there are also blacknesses. The first duty of a commentator is to strive to plumb the deepnesses and to make the blacknesses grey. His efforts will often be partially, they will sometimes be wholly, unsuccessful. Plain phrasing and high thinking are rarely found together in Browning's poetry; it is just where the thought is most intricate that the periods are most thorny. Now

and again more meanings than one are packed into a sentence, and a commentator may mistake a secondary for a primary intention or may see what rests upon the surface and fail to probe what lies below. Yet he need not be disheartened. His partial and tentative interpretations may help a more fortunate or perspicacious student to interpretations which are complete and sure ; even his sheer blunders by exciting surprise or impatience may bring him correction. It is possible, of course, that having peered and peered into a dark place he may find that he cannot even think that he dimly sees his way. In that case he should follow the rule that guided Dr. Johnson when he wrote his notes on Shakespeare ; he should frankly confess his inability. If he passes without remark over passages which readers are certain to find puzzling, he annoys or he discourages. Some will condemn his commentary, it may be unjustly, but not unnaturally, as a fraud. Others will be dismayed by a misgiving that, as they find difficulties where, apparently, there are none, they must be exceptionally obtuse ; they will feel as Douglas Jerrold is said to have felt when on recovery from an illness he tried to read *Sordello* : 'I'm an idiot', he reflected, 'my mind's gone'.

II. Students of a poem so allusive, so variously and sometimes so mysteriously allusive, as *The Ring and the Book* will often wish for explanations even in passages in which the poet's language and his drift are free from obscurity. It has been remarked that Browning paid his readers the high compliment of assuming that their erudition was as extensive and peculiar as his own ; he referred compendiously, as to matters of common knowledge, to all manner of matters literary, artistic, historical, ecclesiastical, social, biographical, topographical, zoological, anatomical and so forth, which are familiar, if familiar at

all, to specialists only. He vouchsafes us a reference to the Eighth Æneid for your frigid Virgil's fieriest word, but where are we to find the sole joke of Thucydides, and the jest (if jest there was) of the Patavinian about the Aretines? What was the gold snow Jove rained on Rhodes, and why might Arcangeli ask, 'What's this to Bacchus?' What are the chasms permissible only to Catullus, and what are the scazons into which Caponsacchi was to insert an iambus impermissibly? Why was Pompilia according to one speaker *Thalassian*-pure, and who was the Corinna whom according to another she could act without book? Even trained scholars have answered one or two of these questions wrongly, or have confessed that they cannot answer them at all. Again, how was Caponsacchi to break Priscian's head, and what was the Brazen Head that broke itself? What sort of verse is Bembo's verse, and what is a Marinesque Adoniad? Who was frank Ser Franco of the Merry Tales, and who was Guido's wicked townsman of the sonnet-book? What is the tract *De Tribus* which St. John did not write, and who wrote the *De Raptu Helenæ*? Who was Olimpia of the Vatican, and what Olimpias and Biancas gave their husbands power unlimited? What is the arachnoid tunic of the brain, and what are the symphyses? What is the Boat-fountain, and what are the caritellas over which the Triton snorted a spray? How, at tarocs, do you nick the nine and ninety and one over? What is the *Est-est*, and what is Tern Quatern? Who were the Molinists, and what was their Philosophic Sin? Why should Fénelon be let know the fool he is, and for what would he be condemned? Who was the Pope's sagacious Swede? Who was the accomplished Ciro Ferri? Who was florid old rogue Albano? These are among the questions, under some of the headings above-mentioned, which are raised

by allusions in *The Ring and the Book*. Most readers can answer some of them, many can answer many; but Browning writes as if we could all answer them all, without hesitation and 'without book'. We may, no doubt, leave a large proportion of them unanswered without being seriously thrown out, but they excite our curiosity; we should like to know the answers, if only it were not sometimes necessary to search for them far and wide. It is the plain duty of a commentator to make the search; if in a particular case he has not made it, or has made it unsuccessfully, he should say that that is so.

III. Excellent detailed expositions have been published of some of Browning's longer and more difficult poems: we have for instance Mr. Duff's study of *Sordello* and Mr. Nettleship's analysis of *Fifine*; but owing, perhaps, partly to its relative clearness and partly to its abnormal length there has been but little detailed exposition of *The Ring and the Book*, and that little has been casual and somewhat thin. General literary criticism of the poem, on the other hand, has been abundant, systematic, and (within its limits) thorough; much of it is of the finest quality; on important points it is so harmonious that, half a century having passed since the poem was published, it may make some claim to finality. For these reasons it was at first my intention, with respect to this optional function of a commentator, to exercise my option negatively, but the merest commentator cannot fix his thoughts, for any length of time, on a literary masterpiece without having his modest say to say on some of its broader issues; he will see, or imagine that he sees, some of the problems which it presents from a new angle; he will in any case be tempted to examine and compare the appreciations of approved literary critics. Of such appreciations of *The Ring and the Book* many have appeared in well-known

books about Browning, but I have also found stimulating suggestions in papers which have appeared from time to time in the pages of Reviews, and to some of these I have called attention. One of them is an article by Leslie Stephen on 'Browning's Casuistry'; another is the report of a lecture by Henry James on 'The Novel in *The Ring and the Book*'[1]; a third, the most valuable of them all, is a notice of the poem[2], written immediately after the completion of its publication, by that sometime editor of the *Fortnightly Review* who is now Lord Morley.

IV. At the beginning of this Preface I spoke of source-study as something separable from literary appreciation, but of course the two things are very closely linked; the former is only occasionally an end in itself, normally it is but a preliminary to the latter. If a poem has sources external to the poet's mind—and what great epic or drama has not?—literary appreciation must be incomplete if these sources have not been examined; such examination is indeed usually not merely a preliminary to criticism, but an almost indispensable preliminary. My reason for speaking of the two things as separable is that they have in fact been separated; all or nearly all the criticisms of English critics upon *The Ring and the Book* have been made without source-study. The circumstance detracts, not indeed from the excellence of these criticisms, but from their adequacy; it must not be imputed as blame to the critics, for the main source[3] of the poem was still hidden when they wrote. It was not till after the poet's death in 1889 that the collection of papers known as the Yellow Book, upon which his poem was based, passed from his son's hands into the semi-publicity of a college library; it was not till 1908 that its contents became

[1] Reprinted in *Notes on Novelists*.
[2] Reprinted in *Studies in Literature*.
[3] What is known as the 'Secondary Source' (see p. xix) was reprinted as early as 1869.

generally accessible. The appearance in this latter year of the monumental volume which reproduced the Book was an event of the greatest importance ; it placed students of English literature under a load of debt to an American Society and to an American man of letters—to the enterprise of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and to the energy and enthusiasm of Professor Charles W. Hodell. If the possession of this volume, cheap as it is at its price, may seem to some of us in these days a luxury which must be regretfully postponed, the Professor has made the postponement endurable ; for he has published his translation of the documents in 'Everyman's Library', and has thus made it possible for everybody to do much source-study at a cost not seriously exceeding the 'eightpence English just' which Browning paid for his Book to the Florentine stall-keeper[1]. The poet found its leaves 'medicinable' ; he drank greedily of its waters long before he knew that it was to be a 'source'. Few other people, probably, if they read the documents as a thing apart, will find in them healing or refreshment ; read them in close connection with the poem, and you will have your reward. They give a piquant interest to many of the poet's details ; reveal the adroitness of the workmanship with which he fits odd pieces into his mosaic ; enhance our enjoyment of the copiousness of his invention and the subtlety of his wit ; invite us to the investigation of intriguing by-problems ; set in a new perspective sections of the poem which may have seemed tedious but will never seem tedious again. Source-study, as Professor Hodell notes, cannot lay bare the mystery of artistic creation ; but as we make our way through the Yellow Book we are on the

[1] When I began to write this commentary the Professor's larger book was not procurable, and I pursued my source-study in 'Everyman's Library'. The results of the Professor's researches are recorded in an essay and notes which are not printed in his smaller book ; having long worked without their help, but having now examined them, I give myself the pleasure of expressing my admiration for their scholarly thoroughness.

master's very track, we follow with a keener perception the workings of his mind; above all we admire with a constantly growing admiration what he preferred to call the resuscitation—it was in fact the creation—of the outstanding *personae* of his drama, his Guido, his Pompilia, his Caponsacchi.

Many good lovers of Browning will look askance, perhaps, at the intrusion of a commentator; I can only urge as a plea for their forgiveness that I too *multum amavi*. From other students a pioneer who has commented continuously on a not always easy poem of more than twenty thousand lines, and has often, no doubt, commented ill, may fairly ask for indulgence; I ask also for correction and instruction. For these and other boons I am already in debt to several friends. Dr. Thomas Ashby has favoured me with a memorandum on some points relating to the city of Rome; Canon Cruickshank has allowed me to draw upon his varied erudition and has also supplied me with a valuable note on what Browning called the posy of his ring; Mr. C. B. Phillips has had the patience to read and has greatly improved my notes on three of the poet's twelve books; the insight of Mr. A. H. Smith (who, like Canon Cruickshank, has helped me with the 'posy') has prevented some serious mistakes from appearing in print, has enabled me to interpret more than one *locus pæne desperatus*, and has led me to appreciate at its true value a very important section of the poem.

A. K. C.

February 1, 1919.

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NOTE ON THE SOURCES OF THE POEM

For a reason stated in the Introduction to Book I, I have not given in these pages a full narrative of the events with which *The Ring and the Book* is concerned; but a bare outline, in which much that is important is ignored, may be a help to readers of this note.

A certain Guido Franceschini was married at Rome in 1693 to a certain Pompilia who had been [illegible] as the daughter of one Pietro Comparini and his wife. He took her [illegible] wards to [illegible] home at Arezzo, where they lived unhappily together for more than three years: Pompilia, according to her husband, was an intractable and unfaithful wife; Guido, according to his wife, was a cruel indeed an infamous husband. Suddenly, in April 1697, under the escort of a young priest called Caponsacchi, Pompilia fled from Arezzo Romewards, to rejoin [illegible] so she said her (putative) parents. Guido pursued the fugitives, came up with them at the last stage of their journey, had them arrested on a charge of adultery and of flight or complicity in flight. They were taken to Rome and put upon their trial before 'the Tribunal of the Governor', which tribunal, after long delays, pronounced in September 1697 a somewhat indecisive judgment; Caponsacchi was 'relegated' for a time to Civita Vecchia, Pompilia, pending yet further inquiry, was detained in a nunnery, from which, however, she was soon dismissed to quasi-detention in the Comparini's house. There, on December 18, 1697, she gave birth to a child; and there, on January 2, 1698, Guido appeared with four retainers, killed the Comparini, husband and wife, and left Pompilia for dead; she survived, by a miracle, till January 6. Meanwhile the assassins made off for Arezzo, but they were overtaken on their way, conveyed back to Rome, and accused of murder before the above-mentioned Court. That the killing was their act was established by most convincing proofs; the issues raised at the trial were more perplexing. Should a confession be forced by torture from the prisoners? Did they kill their victims to avenge Guido's outraged honour, and was that an extenuation, if not a justification, of the killing? Had Guido's honour been, in fact, outraged? Was the killing attended, or not attended, by aggravating circumstances? Such were the questions discussed,

in a series of pleadings, by the state officials who appeared in the case; on these questions 'wrangled, brangled, jangled they a month' or rather more. At last, on February 18, the Court gave judgment; it condemned the accused, and after an appeal to the Pope, promptly dismissed, they were executed on February 22.

The Yellow Book which Browning picked up at Florence in 1860[1], and which was the primary source of his poem, is for the most part a collection of documents relating to this murder-trial; of its twenty-two pieces only the first, the last but one, and the last have to do with other matters. The first is the confirmation, by 'the Criminal Ruota of Florence', of a sentence pronounced upon Pompilia and others by 'the Commissary of Arezzo'. The last two are (1) a 'memorial of fact' in which 'the Procurator of Charity', Lamparelli, applied to the Roman Court, after Guido's death, for 'the re-integration of the fame and reputation' of Pompilia, and (2) an *Instrumentum Sententiæ Definitivæ* which granted the application. Of these three pieces I need say no more at present.

Of the nineteen papers which relate to the murder-trial fourteen are official documents. The other five are (1) two anonymous pamphlets, printed at Rome during the course of the trial in the interests of the defence and the prosecution respectively; they were addressed to the general public, but, though more popular in style and substance than the pleadings, were probably the work of the advocates engaged; they seem to have suggested to Browning his Books II. and III.; and (2) three letters sent immediately after the executions by Roman lawyers to a lawyer at Florence, one Cencini; of these letters I shall speak in the Introduction to Book XII.

The fourteen official documents are also of two kinds. (1) Three of them are styled 'Summaries'; they are selections from evidence which was either given in the trial for adultery and put in to prove or disprove contentions of the rival advocates in the murder trial, or else given in the course of the murder-trial itself. Among these depositions the most important are those of Pompilia and Caponsacchi[2]. (2) The eleven other documents are pleadings, five of them by counsel for the prosecution, the 'Advocate' or the 'Procurator' of the Fisc (Bottini or Gambi), six by counsel for the defence, the 'Procurator' or the 'Advocate' of the Poor (Arcangeli or Spreti). No speeches were made in Court; the pleadings were 'memorials', written by the lawyers, printed 'in the type of the Reverend Apostolic Chamber' and distributed among the judges and others officially concerned; they were often written hurriedly[3] and always printed carelessly. Their general character is described very faithfully in the poet's Book I.; he quotes from them largely and parodies them brilliantly in his Books VIII. and IX.

[1] See Appendix I. [2] See Appendices IV. and V.
[3] See *O.Y.B.* xxiii., clxi., cxcv., *E.L.* 23, 168, 199.

Thirteen of the twenty-two pieces—the pleadings in the murder-trial, Lamparelli's application, the Definitive Sentence—are in Latin, 'a Latin cramp enough', as Browning says. The Latin is 'interfilleted with Italian streaks'; these streaks are the Arezzo sentence with its confirmation, the summaries, the anonymous pamphlets, and the letters. The poet says, very inaccurately, that only three-fifths of his Yellow Book is in print; he should have said seventeen-eighteenths or thereabouts! The only unprinted portions are the Arezzo sentence and the letters, together with a title-page and an 'index' which the collector added.—From both the Italian and the Latin, from both the printed and the unprinted pieces, Browning squeezed almost every drop of fact or alleged fact that they could yield.

The collector was no doubt the Cencini to whom the letters were addressed, a lawyer professionally interested in the fortunes of Guido and his family, and in close relations with at least one of the advocates who defended the accused. He arranged the pieces that had reached him in chronological order[1], adding, as I have said, a title-page and an 'index'. His title-page, translated by Browning in I. 121-31, reveals the standpoint from which he viewed the case; his 'index' (*indice*) is a useful table of contents.

The poet speaks of the Yellow Book as if it was not merely his primary, but his one and only source; there was however another. In or about the year 1864 a copy, perhaps the only copy in existence of an Italian pamphlet which tells the whole story was found in London and sent him by a friend. Written probably a few, but only a few, years after the events which it records, it records them in most lively fashion, supplementing the Yellow Book with a mass of interesting detail; it became, what Professor Hodell calls it, the poet's 'Secondary Source'. It may, indeed, have set him definitely to the task of composition; facts which it alone gives are freely used in those parts of the poem which were written first, and for this and other reasons it is certain that the poem was begun *after* the date of the new find. *Post hoc* need not of course mean *propter hoc*; but see Appendix I.

I have spoken in the Preface of the 'complete photo-reproduction' of the Yellow Book which Professor Hodell published in 1908. To that reproduction he added other valuable matter: a translation of the Book; a translation of the Secondary Source; a translation of another account of the tragedy of which I have still to speak; an Essay on 'the Making of a great Poem'; and, lastly, a 'Corpus of Topical Notes'. His translations, which have been reprinted for 'Everyman's Library', are not always correct[2], but he has dis-

[1] He made one mistake, however, in his arrangement; see Appendix VI.

[2] A few mistranslations which throw the reader rather seriously out have been noticed in Appendices III., IV., V. I may add that *lotrix* does not mean

charged with no little skill the hard task of interpreting the lawyers' confused and often ungrammatical periods; his essay contains, *inter alia*, a masterly statement of reasons which give a unique interest to the study of the sources of *The Ring and the Book*; of his notes, which deal almost exclusively with the correspondence and the variations between the sources and the poem, I have spoken in the Preface. 'I find a charm', wrote the late Lord Courtney of Penwith, 'in the mere possession of this volume. I finger and turn over its pages . . . with subdued delight'[1]. Every other possessor of Professor Hodell's volume will understand the delight and wonder why it was subdued.

Only a few words need be added about that other account of the tragedy which I mentioned in the last paragraph; though translated in the American book it is not a source of the poem, for it was not discovered till after the poet's death. In the Royal Casanatense Library at Rome there is a collection of manuscript pamphlets entitled *Varii successi curiosi e degni di esser considerati*, and one of these pamphlets deals with the *successo curioso* which it calls the 'Trial and Death of Franceschini and his Companions'. It came to light in the year 1900, and Professor Hall Griffin translated it in the *Monthly Review* for the November of that year[2]; he regarded it as 'the best prose account of the whole case which is known to exist'—a judgment with which few readers of the Secondary Source will agree. It contains much new information, but its special feature is its note of edification; the author dwells with pious and prolix satisfaction on the 'Death of Franceschini', for he 'made a good end'. For students of *The Ring and the Book* the chief importance of the pamphlet is that it confirms one or two guesses at fact which Browning hazarded.

The Yellow Book was given to the library of Balliol College, soon after the poet's death, by Mr. R. Barrett Browning; it is a (somewhat blackened) vellum-bound volume of about 10 by 7½ inches. On the fly-leaf Browning wrote his name and, underneath it, the motto from Pindar on which I shall comment in the note to I. 40: ἐμοὶ μὲν ὧν Μοῖσα καρτερώτατον βέλος ἀλκᾷ τρέφει. At the beginning of the book, on the inside of the cover, he pasted in a small water-colour drawing (reproduced in Professor Hodell's volume) described as *Arme Franceschini Famiglia Aretina* and stated to have

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'strumpet' (*O.Y.B.* 10, *E.L.* 11), that *scissio in frusta* does not mean '*useless* mutilation' (*O.Y.B.* 28, *E.L.* 31), that *absque excessu legis* does not mean 'without excess of law', nor *verecundia* 'truthfulness' (*O.Y.B.* 52, 103, *E.L.* 68, 130), that *conductos* as used in *O.Y.B.* cxliii. means 'hired' not 'led' (*O.Y.B.* 192, *E.L.* 241). *Col soldo* cannot mean 'without a soldo' (*O.Y.B.* 169, *E.L.* 210); by confusing *attesa* with *attesta* the Professor makes havoc of the meaning of a sentence in *O.Y.B.* 116, *E.L.* 145-6; his translation of Note A in *E.L.* 92 is also impossible. (*O.Y.B.*=the Professor's larger, *E.L.* his smaller book.)

[1] *The Times*, Literary Supplement, February 25, 1909.

[2] His translation is reprinted in Appendix B of his *Life of Robert Browning*.

been copied *Da un MS Priorista Aretino esistente presso la famiglia Albergotti*[1]; it is dated *Arezzo Luglio 1868*. How he obtained it is told in a note written above it: '(From Seymour Kirkup, Florence)'; the sender was the 'My Kirkup' to whom he alludes in *Pacchiarotto*, II., and to whom I shall refer in my note on XII. 222-4. Browning makes use of this drawing in XI. 2161-6 and XII. 821-4; as its date was July 1868 and the poem was published in November 1868–February 1869 we see that the interval between the completion of the poem and its publication was short.

In the same case as the Yellow Book are kept (1) the ring described in the opening lines of the poem (see note on l. 1), and (2) a pen-sketch of Guido, said to have been made shortly before or on the very day of his execution: a reproduction of it serves as the frontispiece to this Commentary. The sketch 'was sent to the Poet by a stranger, who found it in a bundle of drawings, etc. which he bought at a sale in England' (*O.Y.B.* 298). For Guido's personal appearance, and for his dress on the day of his death, see *O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 266 (Secondary Source); cf. I. 782-4, IV. 717-19, VII. 396, and especially XII. 190-204.

Mr. Pickard-Cambridge, the librarian of Balliol, whom I have to thank for much kindness, including permission to photograph the sketch, was unable, when he showed me the treasures of his library, to tell me what has become of the 'Secondary Source'.

[1] An extract from a letter to Pietro, written by one of this family evidently friendly to the Franceschini, will be found in the first 'Summary' in the Yellow Book (*O.Y.B.* liv., *E.L.* 55).

NOTE ON REFERENCES

O.Y.B. = *The Old Yellow Book, Source of Browning's The Ring and the Book, in complete Photo-reproduction with Translation, Essay, and Notes* by Charles W. Hodell (Second Edition, Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1916).

E.L.[1] = *The Old Yellow Book: Source of Robert Browning's The Ring and the Book* [Professor Hodell's translation, with short notes: published in 'Everyman's Library'] (London, undated).

The First Anonymous Pamphlet = *Notizie di fatto e di ragioni per la Causa Franceschini* [*O.Y.B.* cxli.-cliv., 116-126; *E.L.* 145-156].

The Second Anonymous Pamphlet = *Risposta Alle notizie di fatto e di ragioni nella Causa Franceschini* [*O.Y.B.* ccvii.-ccxxv., 168-183; *E.L.* 209-226].

The Secondary Source = *The Death of the Wife-Murderer Guido Franceschini, by Beheading* [*O.Y.B.* 209-213, *E.L.* 259-266. See above, p. xix].

The post-Browning Pamphlet = *Trial and Death of Franceschini and his Companions, etc.* [*O.Y.B.* 217-225, *E.L.* 269-281. See above, p. xx. The inaccurately phrased reference may remind the reader that this pamphlet was not one of Browning's sources, having been discovered after his death].

The Process of Flight = the trial of Pompilia and Caponsacchi for adultery and flight or complicity in flight, often described in the records as *processus fugæ*.

B. and H. Notes = 'Biographical and Historical Notes', appended to the supplementary volume (*Asolando*) added to the sixteen-volume edition of the poet's collected works.

N.E.D. = *New English Dictionary.*

Other references are unabridged, except in a few cases where abridgment seems to need no explanation.

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[1] When referring to passages in *O.Y.B.* I have noted the pages in *E.L.* on which they are translated, but Professor Hodell is not responsible for the translations which I have sometimes given.

BOOK I.—THE RING AND THE BOOK

INTRODUCTION

In Book I. the poet defines his purpose and describes his method. He defines his purpose chiefly by disclosing the full meaning and significance of the title which the Book shares with the whole poem: he describes his method both by a direct statement and by a survey of the ground which the other Books are to cover. Except so far as his twofold aim is thereby subserved it is not a part of the plan of Book I. to tell the story with which the poem is concerned; but unsystematically, incidentally, and by casual instalments it is so far told there that when the reader turns to Book II. he is already at home with it; what he does not then know he will learn before long. It is not true, though it is often said, that the story is given in full ten or twelve times in the poem; it is true that the reader's mind is saturated with it before he has read very far. Even if he reads no farther than to the end of Book I. he will say that a narrative by a commentator would be superfluous.

The poet's statement of his purpose involved, as has been said, a disclosure of the meaning of his title, and that disclosure involved in its turn a description of the source and origin of his poem. He tells us how one summer day, by accident or rather by 'predestination', he picked up from a Florence book-stall an old yellow volume of documents relating to a Roman *cause célèbre* of 1698. He saw 'at a glance', as he somewhere says of a less notable find, 'the subject's crowd of capabilities', but the facts as he found them were 'dead' and 'inert'; if he was to use

them he must give them life, he must breathe his spirit into them. At a later date it occurred to him to employ another metaphor. He wore upon his watch-chain a ring, once his wife's[1], which had been fashioned in imitation of old Etruscan work; the firm of artists who had fashioned it had described to him the delicate process by which the ore had been worked into it, how the necessary hammering and fingering had only been possible when the ore had been mixed with an alloy. It seemed to him that the process by which the facts of his Yellow Book were being, or were to be, worked into his poem was one of the same kind; he could only give them artistic form by mixing them with his fancy. The facts of the book were the jeweller's ore; the poet's fancy was the jeweller's alloy; his fancy mixed with the facts—the poet's poem—was the jeweller's ring. Perhaps the admirable metaphor was pressed too hard. Browning tells us repeatedly that just as, when the jeweller's art has been exercised upon his ring, he disengages the alloy, so, when the poet has fashioned his poem, he will disengage his fancy from it. But he does not disengage it, there is no 'repristination'; unlike the jeweller's alloy, the poet's fancy does not 'fly in fume', it cannot (happily) be 'unfastened' from the facts.

The method adopted in *The Ring and the Book*, and described and justified in the second half of Book I., is that of a series of dramatic monologues. The single dramatic monologue was of course with Browning a constant, and it was his most characteristic mode of literary expression; but the series of monologues in which a succession of speakers say at length what they know and think, or think that they know and think, or would have it thought that they know and think, about a set of facts was a new departure, on which he did not venture a second time. The method has the obvious drawback that it involves repetition, but though repetition is frequent it is rarely wearisome in *The Ring and the Book*; it is often very dexterously avoided, the poet's resourcefulness gives to sameness the adroitest touches of variety[2]. Mr.

[1] See the note on I. 1.
[2] See further in the Introductions to Books II. and IX.

Chesterton says that its method makes the poem 'the epic of free speech'[1], and that the use of the method means that truth being many-sided it can only be rightly apprehended when its many sides have been presented to our view. Now the poet's language shows that he had in mind this advantage of free speech[2], but he did not forget its attendant disadvantage, that it involves the presentation of the many sides of falsehood as well as of those of truth. If, as in the records upon which his poem is founded, the evidence which free speech supplies is as often false as true, if it is conflicting and nicely balanced[3], it may baffle our judgment: it may prevent us from pronouncing 'a sentence absolute for shine or shade'; it may make us doubtful about the heroism of heroes and the knavery of knaves. In our perplexity we shall welcome help from an expert, but he must not offer it until all the evidence has been heard: if he offers it before, we shall give some of it no fair hearing, the advantage of free speech will be lost. It detracts from the claim of *The Ring and the Book* to be what Mr. Chesterton calls it that Browning appears as expert at the start: before he has summoned a single witness he tells us quite plainly what our 'ultimate judgment' is to be[4]. When he wrote *Sordello* he declared that he would have preferred to adopt a purely dramatic method, to keep out of sight, and to let his hero say his own say; but reflection convinced him that

> Your setters-forth of unexampled themes,
> Makers of quite new men, producing them,
> Would best chalk broadly on each vesture's hem
> The wearer's quality; or take their stand,
> Motley on back and pointing-pole in hand,
> Beside him.

In *The Ring and the Book* his theme is not so unexampled, his men are not quite so new. They speak for themselves, but he does not 'leave you to say the rest for them': before they 'emerge', he chalks their quality on their vesture

[1] *Browning*, p. 173. [2] I. 1348-78.

[3] Browning spoke to W. M. Rossetti of 'the mass of almost equally balanced evidence' which the records contain (*Rossetti Papers*, p. 401).

[4] When the poem was first published objection was taken to the early disclosure of the whole plan and plot: to that objection Mr. John Morley supplied a complete answer (*Fortnightly Review*, March 1, 1869, pp. 333-4). The objection taken above is different.

and takes his stand with his pointing-pole[1].—How far, when after forestalling our verdict he lets his witnesses give their evidence, he makes them say what they would themselves have said or actually did say is another question —one of much interest in connection with his reiterated declaration that he adhered to his documents most scrupulously. I have attempted to answer it, so far as the hero and heroine are concerned, in Appendix V.

Among the most arresting passages in Book I. are those which describe how immediately after he had bought it Browning's attention was riveted to his Yellow Book: how as he picked his way through the crowded streets hé read it through, from its first to its last page; how before reaching home he had 'mastered the contents': how when at home in Casa Guidi he 'read and read it' till far on into the night. As the hours passed he no doubt became obsessed by the psychological problems which it presented and, it may be, by a first suggestion of the spiritual romance which his imagination was in the fulness of time to body forth. All students of his works are familiar with certain often-quoted words which he used in the letter which serves as a preface to *Sordello*: 'My stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul: little else is worth study. I, at least, always thought so'. It is right that the words should be often quoted; but as used by the critics they sometimes suggest an unduly restricted conception of the range of the poet's interests. His first concern as he perused the Yellow Book was, we may safely conjecture, with the story as such. For, let the psychologists say what they will, such stories as mere stories had the strongest fascination for him. Whether the Yellow Book provides materials for a good detective novel has been disputed; it has been described as too 'trumpery', and in some respects it deserves that epithet; many readers agree with the judgment of Carlyle, who, when congratulating Browning on his 'wonderful poem', declared with Carlylese politeness that it is 'all made out of an Old Bailey story that might have been told in ten lines and only wants forgetting'[2]. Be that as it may, we

[1] *Sordello*, I. 11-31.

[2] *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham*, pp. 284-5. Rossetti,

must remember that the poet's interest in the development of souls never blunted the keenness of his vision for much that in comparison with it may be mean and trivial and trumpery. He stored in his memory what his observant eye had told him of 'the cobbler at his trade', 'the man who slices lemons into drink', the laundress 'at the cistern by Citorio', 'the puppets of Place Navona'; he could pore over the weediest and scrubbiest vegetable growths, the most repulsive varieties of vermin. His interest in the details of crimes and criminal trials however sordid—an interest which, we are told, was hereditary [1]—never flagged [2], and, though it was heightened by his sense of their possible implications, it was primarily that unsophisticated interest which the humblest of us share and many of the most eminent avow. Evidence of this interest in Browning, as of his extensive and peculiar knowledge of the annals of crime, will be found in many books [3]; no such evidence, perhaps, is more convincing than that of an entry in the diary of Alfred Domett (the poet's 'Waring'): 'He [Browning] had been present during the whole of his [Cockburn's] summing up on the Tichborne case'! The Lord Chief Justice summed up in masterly style, but the performance took twenty days, and even Browning can hardly have cared to study very closely the development of the soul of Arthur Orton; he had no use for a *stupid* knave [4].—The poet's absorption in the minutest details of the Old Bailey story of his Old Yellow Book should convince his readers that if they are to understand and to share the zest with which he wrote

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we are told, 'seemed himself to lean a little to this view'. Mr. John Morley wrote in 1869 that when the first instalment of the poem was published 'it was pronounced a murky subject, sordid, unlovely, morally sterile' (*Fortnightly Review*, March 1, 1869, p. 331). Carlyle's compliment might have been retorted on his own brilliant and elaborate study of the Old Bailey story of the Diamond Necklace, in which he declares that he found romance (as Browning did in the story of Pompilia) quite apart from its connection with Marie Antoinette. See *The Diamond Necklace*, c. 1.

[1] Sharp, *Life of Robert Browning*, p. 21.

[2] 'In his old age, he shows traces of being so bizarre a thing as an abstract police detective, writing at length in letters and diaries his views of certain criminal cases in an Italian town' (Chesterton, *Browning*, p. 85).

[3] See Hodell in *O.Y.B.* 247; Chesterton, *Browning*, p. 85; Dowden, *Browning*, p. 253; Hall Griffin, *Life*, p. 254; Kegan Paul, *Memories*, p. 338.

[4] Since I wrote as above I have discovered that, if the date given by Professor Hall Griffin for the entry in the diary is correct, Domett's statement is misleading. That date is 'Feb. 3, 1874'; but the summing-up, which began on January 29, did not end till February 28.

they must not only rise (so far as they can) as he rose; they must stoop as he stooped.

The Ring and the Book, says M. Pierre Berger, is of all Browning's works *celle qui représente le mieux toute la puissance, toute la variété de son esprit*. Of the poet's *power* Book 1. provides many striking examples; take for instance the lines which describe the extent and the limitations of the possibilities of artistic creation. His *variety* is felt, not only when we compare one section of the poem with another, but within the limits of particular sections—nowhere more, perhaps, than in Book 1. The passages to which reference was made at the beginning of the last paragraph are a good proof of this variety. The first, like some other passages in Browning, is Browningized Dickens. 'We have heard', wrote Bagehot, 'that Mr. Dickens can go down a crowded street and tell you all that is in it, what each shop was, what the grocer's name was, how many scraps of orange peel there were upon the pavement'[1]. Browning could do the same, and here he does it. And then from the life and colour of central Florence, from 'buzzing and blaze, noontide and market-time', from the first rapid but absorbing search through the pages of the mere detective story, he takes us into 'the blackness', 'the beauty and the tearfulness of night', and, as we stand beside him on the Casa Guidi balcony, reveals to us the significance and the impressiveness of what has become for him 'the tragic piece'.

Book 1. ends with the best-known passage in the poem, the dedication to the poet's dead wife. All readers of poetry are haunted by its beauty, perhaps also by its occasional elusiveness; many who have loved and lost have felt its poignant appeal. As a dedication to *The Ring and the Book* it is particularly appropriate. Critics tell us that Browning's *direct* influence on Mrs. Browning's poetry was small, and that hers on his was perhaps smaller still[2]; we know that it was not their habit to consult

[1] *Literary Studies*, ii. p. 138.

[2] See *e.g.* P. Berger, *Robert Browning*, p. 40. It has, however, been supposed that Mrs. Browning's direct influence can be traced in the poet's attitude towards Christianity in *Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day*, written at Florence in 1850.—The dedication of *The Ring and the Book* is only one of many proofs that he regarded her *indirect* influence on his poetry as immeasurably great; he felt that, as he tells her, God 'best taught song by gift of thee'. See Stopford Brooke, *Browning*, p. 354.

one another about poems on which they were engaged, or even to show them to one another [1] till they were ready to go to press. The Yellow Book had been found, and had moved the poet most deeply, twelve months before Mrs. Browning's death; during those months she wrote freely to intimate friends about her husband's concerns; but she did not allude to the great find, possibly she had barely heard of it [2]. For all that her influence on *The Ring and the Book*, though it was written many years later, was most profound; without her inspiration, as Mrs. Orr has convincingly argued, he could never have created his Pompilia [3].

NOTES

1. *Do you see this Ring?*] 'Mr. R. Barrett Browning has written as follows: "The ring was a ring of Etruscan shape made by Castellani, which my mother wore. On it are the letters A E I. Ever after her death my father wore it on his watch chain"' (Hodell in *O.Y.B.* 337-8, note 539). This ring is now in the Balliol College Library.

3. *Castellani.*] The famous Roman artist-jewellers, a visit to whom, on an interesting occasion, Mrs. Browning describes in a letter (*Life of Mrs. Browning*, ii. p. 354). Part of a Castellani collection was purchased by the British Museum in 1872–3; another part, including (says Ruskin) 'quite marvellous Etruscan gold', it declined to purchase (Ruskin's *Works*, Library Edition, xxxvii. p. 195). On the delicate workmanship required for the reproduction of Etruscan jewellery by the firm see E. T. Cook, *Handbook to the British Museum*, p. 571.

23. *repristination.*] See Introduction to Book I.

27. *rondure*] =circle: cf. the *Asolando* volume, pp. 96, 137. Shakespeare, who seems to have imported the word, has both 'rondure' and 'roundure'.

32. *now for the thing signified.*] What is signified begins to appear in 141 *seqq.*

40. *Mark the predestination.*] 'Browning dedicated himself to the picturing of humanity; and he came to think that a Power beyond ours had accepted this dedication, and directed his work. . . . He believed that he had certain God-given qualities which

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[1] Mrs. Browning wrote in 1853: 'Robert is working at a volume of lyrics, of which I have seen but a few. . . . We neither of us show our work to one another till it is finished' (Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 187).

[2] See Appendix I.

[3] See Introduction to Book VII.

fitted him' for the task (Stopford Brooke, *Browning*, p. 402). His sense of this in relation to *The Ring and the Book* appears again in such passages as 520-21, 760-79 below.—In his Old Yellow Book the poet wrote below his name: ἐμοὶ μὲν ὦν Μοισα καρτερώτατον βέλος ἀλκᾷ τρέφει ('for me the Muse in her might hath in store her strongest shaft'; Pindar, *Ol.* i. 112). His son wrote: 'I know he thought *The Ring and the Book* was going to be his greatest work long before he had finished it' (Hodell in *O.Y.B.* 230).

42. *One day still fierce.*] A June day (see 92 below).

43-116.] See Introduction to this Book.

43. *Across a Square in Florence.*] The Piazza San Lorenzo (line 92). On the west side of this Piazza is the ugly unfinished façade of the church which gives it its name; east of the church is 'Baccio's marble' (line 45), a statue by Baccio Bandinelli of Giovanni delle Bande Nere, the father of Cosimo I. The Riccardi Palace (line 48), a corner of which touches the Piazza on the N.E., was originally the palace of the Medici (line 51); it was sold to the Riccardi in 1659, and became a Government office in 1814. (The Riccardi Palace of *The Statue and the Bust* is elsewhere.)

65. *Treading the chill scagliola bedward.*] Scagliola is properly 'a local name in the Italian Alps for limestones of various colours' (*N.E.D.*), but the word is used loosely for compositions made for tables, pillars, floorings, and so forth. Mrs. Browning, describing her Casa Guidi home in a letter, says that the arms of the last count of the Guidi 'are in scagliola on the floor of my bedroom' (*Life and Letters of Robert Browning*, p. 149).

66. *two crazie*]=1½d. See note on 324 below.

69.] See below, 369.

73. *that Joconde.*] Lionardo da Vinci's portrait of Mona Lisa, La Gioconda (wife of the artist's friend Francesco del Giocondo). The story of the recent theft of this masterpiece from the Louvre and of its subsequent recovery is well known.

77. *Spicilegium.*] Italian *spicilegio*, collection of extracts (by derivation, gleaning of ears of corn).

78. *the Frail One of the Flower.*] *La Dame aux Camellias*, by Alexandre Dumas the younger, first published in 1850.

92. *June was the month*], and 1860 was (probably or perhaps certainly) the year; see Appendix I.

110-11. *from written title-page To written index.*] The title-page and the 'index' (*indice*, *i.e.* table of contents) of the Yellow Book were written, no doubt, by Cencini, the collector of the documents; a translation of the title-page is given, more or less 'word for word' (132), by the poet below. He evidently wrote these lines without referring to the Yellow Book, for the 'index' will be found there, not at the end, but immediately after the title-page; see the note on 119 below.

112.] Browning's walk home to Casa Guidi from the Piazza San

Lorenzo may be followed on the map. 'The Pillar' is in the Piazza of the Santa Trinità, close to 'the Bridge' of the same name; it was taken from the Baths of Caracalla at Rome to commemorate the victories of Cosimo I. (*c.* 1565).

119. *Print three-fifths, written supplement the rest.*] A very strange inaccuracy; of the 262 pages of the Yellow Book not more than 14 are written. See the note on 110-11.

122. *Position.*] Italian *Posizione, i.e.* setting-forth.

129-31. *Wherein it is disputed, etc.*] This summary of the 'criminal cause' shows the bias of the writer of the title-page (see note on 110-11), who was a Florentine lawyer professionally interested in Guido's affairs (see the letters in *O. Y. B.* cexxxv. xli., *E.L.* 235-8).

136. *a Latin cramp enough.*] For 'cramp' see *Pippa Passes*, I.: 'instead of cramp couplets, each like a knife in your entrails, he should write both classically and intelligibly'; *Aristophanes' Apology*, p. 130, 'cramp phrase, uncouth song'. Ruskin speaks of 'the cramp Thucydides', of 'much cramp mathematics and useless chemistry', of 'a lot of work in cramp perspective'.

138. *interfilleted with Italian streaks.*] The Italian parts of the Yellow Book are the title-page and 'index', the depositions of witnesses, three letters, and two pamphlets.

141-4.] See 458 *seqq.* below and cf. *The Two Poets of Croisic*, CLII.:—

> But truth, truth, that's the gold! and all the good
> I find in fancy is, it serves to set
> Gold's inmost glint free, gold which comes up rude
> And rayless from the mine. All fume and fret
> Of artistry beyond this point pursued
> Brings out another kind of burnish: yet
> Always the ingot has its very own
> Value, a sparkle struck from truth alone.

146. *summed-up circumstance.*] The Yellow Book contains three *Summaria*, consisting of depositions and the like; two of these were produced by the prosecution, one by the defence.

154. *nowise out of it.*] Incorrect. The advocates often refer to evidence which had, apparently, been printed but is not to be found in the Yellow Book.

165. *'Twas the so-styled Fisc began.*] Criminal prosecutions were conducted by the Advocate and the Procurator of the Fisc (often called 'the Fisc' in the records), who at the time of the trial were Bottini and Gambi. For the distinction between Advocate and Procurator see note on VIII. 276.

Browning appears to be mistaken in supposing that the Fisc 'began' the pleadings; see note on VIII. 68. But some passages in the defending advocate's 'Argument the First' suggest that the case for the prosecution had already been outlined.

169. *five . . . what we call qualities of bad.*] Six *qualitates* (*i.e.* aggravating circumstances) of Guido's crime were alleged by the prosecution; see note on VIII. 1108-1455.

173. *Count Guido Franceschini.*] Very likely Guido was a Count, as Browning and Professor Hodell say, but the records do not so describe him. The word which Hodell translates 'Count' is invariably *dominus*, which is applied in the Yellow Book to men of all sorts and conditions, *e.g.* to Caponsacchi and to Pietro (*O.Y.B.* clv.).

177. *Patron of the Poor.*] Guido was defended by Arcangeli, Procurator (or Patron) of the Poor (cf. VIII. 1529), and Spreti, Advocate of the Poor.

178-9. *Official mouthpiece — to fee a better.*] Spreti remarks of himself and of the Advocate of the Fisc: 'He, like myself also, ought solely to seek the truth and to be its advocates, as being both of us officials of the Prince' (*O.Y.B.* cxxxviii., *E.L.* 143-4). Sir F. Treves (*The Country of 'The Ring and the Book'*, p. 80) quotes from a contemporary *Relatione della Corte di Roma*: 'The Advocate of the Poor has charge to write free of cost for all poor and needy persons'. The same thing was evidently true of the Procurator of the Poor.

It does not follow that, as Browning says, Arcangeli only appeared as 'mouthpiece' for Guido and his confederates because they were 'too poor to fee a better'. Both he and his colleague Spreti were considered to have shown 'much erudition' in the trial (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265); the poet makes Guido admit that his advocates were 'capital o' the cursed kind' (XI. 72) — 'Look at my lawyers', he says, 'lacked they grace of law, Latin or logic?' (XI. 1757-8); and Arcangeli (XII. 287) 'lowly begs the next commands' of his family. In Browning's *Cenciaja* a wealthy noble, accused of matricide, is considered fortunate because he has 'gained for his defence The Advocate o' the Poor'.

186. *Reward him rather!*] Arcangeli does not go so far as this; he only asks for a mitigation of the murder-penalty.

205. *portentousest.*] Browning uses the superlative inflection more freely than other modern writers (except perhaps Carlyle), more freely even than Shakespeare. He affects it especially in adjectives ending in '-ous'; he writes for instance 'atrociousest', 'beauteousest', 'deliciousest', 'dubiousest', 'famousest' (so Milton), 'heinousest', 'hideousest', 'irreligiousest', 'preciousest', 'sagaciousest', 'strenuousest'. Shakespeare gives the inflection to participles, *e.g.* 'lyingest', 'daring'st', 'willing'st', and Browning writes 'movingest', 'whimperingest', 'sneaking'st' ('the sneaking'st crew I e'er despised'—*Colombe's Birthday*, Act III.).

215-16. *a firebrand at each fox's tail, etc.*] Judges xv. 4, 5.

222. *Solon and his Athenians.*] *O.Y.B.* x., lxxvii., *E.L.* 12, 84; cf. VIII. 570-71.

223. *the code Of Romulus and Rome.*] *O.Y.B.* x., *E.L.* 12; cf. VIII. 572-3.

224. *modern Baldo, Bartolo.*] Eminent Italian jurists of the fourteenth century; *O.Y.B.* xiv., xxxviii., clxxxi., *E.L.* 16, 36, 187. In XII. 361 Arcangeli is represented as 'straining every nerve' to make his son 'a Bartolus-cum-Baldo for next age'.

226-7.] *E.g. O.Y.B.* x., xiv., *E.L.* 12, 15; cf. VIII. 574.

227-8. de *Something-or-other.*] *De Adulteriis.* See note on VIII. 570-74.

230. *That nice decision of Dolabella.*] *O.Y.B.* xxii., *E.L.* 22. In VIII. 914-49 Browning quotes Arcangeli's account of the case which Dolabella decided.

231. *That pregnant instance of Theodoric.*] *O.Y.B.* xxvii., *E.L.* 28. See note on VIII. 482-7.

232. *that choice example Ælian gives.*] *O.Y.B.* cxiv., *E.L.* 149; cf. VIII. 511-18; the example is (I think) given only once (not 'much insisted on') in the records. It comes from Ælian's treatise *περὶ ζῴων ἰδιότητος* (cited as *Historia Animalium*), xi. 15.

241. *wrangled, brangled, jangled.*] See note on IX. 1039-40. 'To brangle', which properly means 'to shake', has been used for 'to quarrel' since the sixteenth century, through the influence perhaps of 'brabble' (see note on IV. 10) and 'wrangle' (*N.E.D.*).

—. *a month.*] The proceedings began, according to the records, 'in the current month of January'; according to Browning, on January 5, before Pompilia's death. Judgment was given on February 18.

248-9.] The court was not called upon to make, and did not in fact make, any such pronouncement when it declared Guido guilty. It was only after his execution, when Pompilia's representative wished to give effect to her will, that, by an *Instrumentum Sententiæ Definitivæ* (August–September 1698), it restored 'the good name and reputation of Francesca Pompilia'.

257-8.] *O.Y.B.* ccxxxv.-xl., *E.L.* 235-8; see Introduction to Book XII.

261-5.] What 'minor orders' Guido had taken is not stated in the records. The 'first tonsure' was not an order, but a necessary *signum destinationis ad ordinem*; it was given to mere boys who thereby became 'clerks' but not ecclesiastics. The four minor orders (of porters, readers, exorcists, acolytes) conferred the benefit of clergy, but did not impose celibacy; cf. what Guido says in V. 269-73:—

> I assumed
> Three or four orders of no consequence,
> —They cast out evil spirits and exorcise,
> For example; bind a man to nothing more,
> Give clerical flavour to his layman's-salt.

The major orders were those of subdeacon, deacon, priest. See

the *Doctrina de Sacramento Ordinis* of the Council of Trent, c. 2 (Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papstthums*, p. 246).

Browning's '*presbyter, Primæ tonsuræ, subdiaconus, Sacerdos*' is a strange jumble; he makes a lawyer, arguing to an ecclesiastical court, mix up the first tonsure with the *major* orders, and speak as though a *presbyter* were not a *sacerdos*. What the lawyer should here have named, with (and after) the first tonsure, was of course the *minor* orders.

271-5.] The 'zealous orator' was Ugolinucci, one of Cencini's correspondents (see Introduction to Book XII.), who says that when the court determined to await proofs of Guido's *chiericato* his 'good friends began to breathe again' (*O.Y.B.* ccxxxix., *E.L.* 238).

285. *the Emperor's envoy.*] Martinez; see XII. 94-9 and note on XI. 2279.

287. *Civility.*] See note on II. 1473.

295. *how short of shine.*] See note on 1373 below.

297. *nay, read Herodotus.*] He will tell you that nemesis attends great prosperity and great expectations, *e.g.* in his stories of Crœsus, Xerxes, Polycrates.

300-3.] See Appendix VII. and the note on X. 384-7.

301.] On the Pope's age see note on X. 166.

307. *Those Jansenists, re-nicknamed Molinists*[1].] For the Molinists, to whom there are over thirty references in the poem, see Appendix VIII. The Jansenists, named after Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638), Bishop of Ypres, held semi-Calvinistic opinions concerning Free Will, and hinted at limits to papal infallibility; their doctrines, as stated in their founder's *Augustinus*, were pronounced heretical and abominable by Innocent X., at the instance of the Jesuits, in 1653 (see Mirbt, *Quellen*, pp. 295-6), and were also condemned by his successors; hence Guido in XI. 1781 calls Jansen to witness ('Ask Jansenius else!') that papal pretensions have 'grown beyond Earth's bearing'. There were affinities between

[1] The Molinists of *The Ring and the Book*, who, says Browning, were merely Jansenists re-named, must not be confused with the more famous Molinists who were bitter enemies of the French Jansenists in the eighteenth century; their quarrels, wrote Voltaire, 'have done more harm to the Christian religion than could have been done by four emperors like Julian' (see Morley's *Voltaire*, c. v. § 1; cf. *Cambridge Modern History*, viii. pp. 9, 12). These latter Molinists adhered to the tenets of the Spanish Jesuit Molina, rejecting the Jansenist doctrine of predestination, as appears from an epigram quoted by Boswell in his *Life of Dr. Johnson* (year 1778). During the free-will controversy between the sects a charming young lady 'appeared at a masquerade *habillée en Jésuite*', and the epigrammatist remarked:

On s'étonne ici que Caliste
Ait pris l'habit de Moliniste.
Puisque cette jeune beauté
Ôte à chacun sa liberté,
N'est-ce pas une Janséniste?

their temper of mind and Molinist passivity, but it is rather, perhaps, because the Papacy adopted the same attitude towards them both that the Molinists are here spoken of as Jansenists under a new name.

309-14.] In the intervals of leisure between one task and the next people like to have something to find fault with. But why are such intervals described as ''twixt work *and whistling-while*'? 'Whistling-while', one would have supposed, would itself be a time of leisure, but it seems to be a *tertium quid*.

318. *he peeled off, etc.*] See III. 1475 and Appendix VII.

324. *His own meal costs, etc.*] If this was so, he was almost as abstemious as his most abstemious predecessor. When Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, visited Rome during the reign of Innocent XI., in 1685, 'one assured me', he wrote, 'that the expence of his [Innocent XI.'s] Table did not amount to a Crown a Day; tho' this is indeed short of *Sisto* V., who gave Order to his Steward, never to exceed five and twenty Bajokes, that is, eighteen pence a Day, for his Diet' (*Some Letters*, pp. 248-9).

—. *five carlines.*] The *carlino* was a small Neapolitan silver coin, worth about 4d.; it is said to owe its name to Charles of Anjou, king of the two Sicilies (1266–85).

Before the Union of Italy the coins of different Italian governments were current throughout the peninsula. Browning mentions as current at Rome during the reign of Innocent XII., besides the Papal *scudo* (=5 francs), *paolo* and *baiocco* ($\frac{1}{10}$ and $\frac{1}{100}$ of a *scudo* respectively), the Venetian *zecchino*, the Neapolitan *carlino* and the Tuscan (?) *crazia*; his persons also talk of ducats (Neapolitan), dollars (=thalers, originally Bohemian) and doits (Dutch); the doit is with them, as with Shakespeare, a conventional expression for a sum of negligible value. The poet also speaks of the Tuscan *soldo* (the equivalent of the Papal *baiocco*) and of the Piedmontese *lira* as current at Florence in 1860.

346. *with his particular chirograph.*] *O.Y.B.* ccxxxv., *E.L.* 235: *con Chirographo particolare, i.e.* by a special order in his own handwriting.

350-60.] Browning lays much stress on this alleged 'substitution' of the Piazza del Popolo for the 'bridge-foot close by Castle Angelo' as the place of the execution of Guido and his companions; cf. X. 2108-14, XII. 106-9, 147-9, 310-13. His Pope says that he makes the change from an unfashionable to a fashionable quarter in order that Guido's peers, 'the quality', may 'see, fear, and learn'; his Venetian of rank regards it 'as a conciliatory sop to the mob', given 'in malice'; his Arcangeli stigmatizes it as 'indecent' and 'due to spite'.

The poet learnt that the executions took place in the Piazza del Popolo from the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265; cf. the post-Browning pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* 224, *E.L.* 280), but no one in the

Yellow Book speaks of an 'indecent change' or of any change at all; the place of the executions is not even mentioned in any of the three letters written immediately after them to Cencini.

In his *Cenciaja* Browning records that just a century before Guido the unfortunate Marchese dell' Oriolo

> had his head cut off
> In Place Saint Angelo, beside the Bridge,
> With Rome to see, a concourse infinite.

350. *head-and-hanging-place.*] Cf. V. 84, 86; *Measure for Measure*, 2. 1. 250-51, 'heading and hanging', 'head and hang'.

351.] The Mausoleum of Hadrian, which became a fortress in A.D. 423, and got its name of St. Angelo from an incident in the life of Gregory the Great (see note on X. 1011), is on the right bank of the Tiber. You cross to it by Hadrian's *Pons Aelius* (Ponte S. Angelo).

357.] 'The gate' is the Porta del Popolo, the northern gate of Rome; 'the church' adjacent to it is S. Maria del Popolo.

358. *the Pincian gardens green with spring.*] An anachronism. The Pincian Hill, which rises steeply behind the east side of the Piazza del Popolo, is now laid out in beautiful gardens, but 'all that land was but a grass-grown hillside, crowned by a few small and scattered villas and scantily furnished with trees, until the beginning of the present [*i.e.* the nineteenth] century' (Marion Crawford, *Ave Roma Immortalis*, i. p. 259). 'Till *c.* 1840 a deserted waste' (Hare, *Walks in Rome*, i. p. 27).

There is a further anachronism, as Sir F. Treves shows (pp. 148-9; see also his Plate 24), in Browning's description of the Piazza as a gay 'cavalcading promenading place' (line 356) in 1698; it was then 'emphatically a Piazza of the People'. Bishop Burnet, who visited Rome in 1685, mentions the 'Noble Obelisk' and 'a Vast Fountain' (*Some Letters*, p. 237); Browning's fountains (line 359) are of later date.

361-2. *my writer adds, etc.*] 'Pitied by all men of honour and by good men', says Arcangeli; 'pitied by every *galant' uomo*', says del Torto (Letters to Cencini).

370-72.] See 66 above.

394. *a lone villa.*] See Appendix II.

410. *British Public, ye who like me not.*] Cf. 1379 below, and contrast XII. 835, 'British Public, who may like me yet'.—In the winter of 1860–61, a few months before her death, Mrs. Browning wrote bitterly of the treatment of her husband by the British Public, which she called an 'infamy'; its 'blindness, deafness and stupidity to Robert are', she said, 'amazing'; and she added, 'it affects him, naturally' (Mrs. Orr, *Life of Robert Browning*, pp. 233-4). In 1864, when Book I. of the poem was probably written, the public was still in much the same mood—it still 'liked him not'; but *Dramatis*

Personæ, published in that year, widened the circle of his admirers —a second edition of the book was soon called for[1]. In 1868 the hope which he expressed in Book XII. that the public might 'like him yet' was evidently shared by his publishers; the appearance in that year of the well-known six-volume edition of his collected poems enhanced his nascent popularity. After the generally enthusiastic reception of his *magnum opus* in the winter of 1868–9 his reputation was firmly established: no one with any claims to be literary could any longer pass him by.

423. *I took my book to Rome first.*] See the second paragraph of Appendix I.

429. *Everyone snickered.*] Everyone in Browning, I think, 'snickers' (see *e.g.* VII. 1277, *The Two Poets of Croisic*, CXLII., *Filippo Baldinucci*), except Mr. Hiram H. Horsefall, who 'sniggers' like other people (*Mr. Sludge, ad fin.*).

433. *The rap-and-rending nation.*] The occupation of Rome by the French lasted (with a short break in 1867) from their successful siege of the city in 1849 till 1870; their garrison was withdrawn after the battle of Sedan in the September of that year. I don't know that there is any ground for the suggestion that they burnt records either during the siege or afterwards.—For 'rap and rend', which the *N.E.D.* says was 'common in the 16th and 17th centuries', cf. *Fifine at the Fair*, Epilogue: 'make and mend, or rap and rend'.

433-5.] Browning was naturally suspect to papal officials. He professed to be unconscious of hostility to the Roman Church as such (see Chesterton, *Browning*, pp. 187-8), but 'some traces of something like a subconscious hostility', to say the least, may be found in his poetry (*e.g.* 'Rome's gross yoke', *Christmas-Eve*, XI.), and many a 'gird at the Temporality' (*e.g.* the damning sentence which ends his *Cenciaja*).

437-8. *Clean for the Church . . . does it tell for once.*] The result of the trial of Guido justifies Browning's 'submission', but much of the poem which he was to write about it (much *e.g.* of Books VI. and X.) was to prove by no means 'clean for the Church'.

444-6.] The Roman authorities, before allowing Browning to 'rove and rummage' (427) among their records, required, he says, that he should 'mend his ways', that he should be 'manned', 'new-manned', or 'wise-manned', *i.e.* that he should become a convert. It was not enough that one of the eminent Catholic priests upon whose names he puns should certify that he was a genuine student, or even that he should promise to refrain from attacks upon the Church.

With Manning Browning was on friendly terms (Mrs. Orr, *Life*,

[1] Yet Browning could in 1867 still describe himself as 'the most unpopular poet that ever was' (see Hall Griffin, *Life*, p. 236).—It is pleasant to find him writing five years later that 'the readers I am at last privileged to expect, meet me fully half-way' and finding 'reassuring warmth in the attention and sympathy I gratefully acknowledge' (Preface to *Selections*, 1872).

p. 229). The poet admitted that the career of Wiseman had suggested *Bishop Blougram's Apology* (published in 1855), but insisted that there was 'nothing hostile in it' (Gavan Duffy, *My Life in Two Hemispheres*, ii. p. 258; cf. Chesterton, *Browning*, p. 188). The Cardinal, anyhow, was not seriously aggrieved; he wrote a 'quite good-natured' review of *Men and Women* in 1856, though it ended with the sentence: 'If Mr. Browning is a man of will and action, and not a mere dreamer and talker, we should never feel surprise at his conversion' (Hall Griffin, *Life*, p. 202).

453. *the loose and large.*] Cf. *e.g.* 506, 'the hot and dense'. Browning carries the substantival use of adjectives further than other poets; he even makes 'gloomy' a substantive.

459. *lingot.*] Whatever may be the etymology of 'ingot', the *l* of the French *lingot*, which Browning uses for 'ingot' only here, represents the definite article as in *lendemain, lierre.*

463.] Cf. 15, 16 above.

467. *the djereed*] is a wooden javelin about 5 ft. long, also the game, 'analogous to tilting at a ring' (Kenyon), in which it is used. *N.E.D.* quotes from Layard: 'they played the Jerid with their long spears, galloping to and fro on their well-trained horses'.

480. *Over the street and opposite the church.*] Casa Guidi, the Brownings' home at Florence, is at the point where the converging Via Maggio and Via Mazzetta join the Via Romana, almost exactly opposite the Pitti Palace. Browning's 'terrace' or balcony, over the Via Mazzetta, faces the side of San Felice church and gives a view down the Via Romana in the direction of the Porta Romana (499), which is about a quarter of a mile away ('a bowshot', says Browning, 498). There is an interesting mention of this balcony in Phelps, *Browning: How to know him*, p. 23. A voice which reached Mrs. Browning's ear through Casa Guidi windows rose ''twixt church and palace of a Florence street' (*Casa Guidi Windows, ad init.*).

It should have been impossible for writers to say that Browning found his Yellow Book in 1865 (see Appendix I.), for Browning never lived at Casa Guidi (or at Florence) after the summer of 1861, when his wife died there.

490. *that gold snow Jove rained on Rhodes.*] Kenyon explains: 'the shower of gold in which Jove visited Danaë', but the Danaë legend (see III. 439, note) has nothing to do with Rhodes. The reference is to *Iliad*, 2. 670. 'Kronion [=Zeus] poured upon them [the Rhodians] marvellous wealth'; and more particularly to Pindar (*Ol.* 7. 34): *βρέχε θεῶν βασιλεὺς ὁ μέγας χρυσέαις νιφάδεσσι πόλιν*, 'the great king of the gods rained golden snow upon the city'—a legendary explanation of the wealth of Rhodes.

497 501.] As I understand, Browning as he stood on his balcony on that dark night cast his eyes W.S.W. towards the Porta Romana, which leads to the direct road from Florence to Rome; then northwards across the Arno till in imagination he identified ('felt') the

Apennine; then eastwards, and then south-eastwards towards Arezzo and Rome.—But I am far from certain that I understand the lines rightly.

508. *Castelnuovo.*] The last halting-place, 15 miles from Rome; see note on VI. 1398. At the Castelnuovo inn Guido overtook the fugitives.

511-15.] 'These lines can mean nothing else', wrote Lord Courtney of Penwith in *The Times* (February 25, 1909), 'than that the three met face to face *in the evening*' at Castelnuovo; and he proceeded to charge the poet with inconsistency, because they all agree in saying (V. 1044-7, 1057; VI. 1514-20; VII. 1580-85) that they met there face to face *at dawn.*

There is however no inconsistency, as Professor Verrall pointed out; the lines do mean something else. Browning saw the place in imagination, not at the time when the three met, but at sunset on the previous evening—at the fateful moment when the two fugitives reached the Castelnuovo inn and were forced by Pompilia's exhaustion to pass the night there.

Lord Courtney had called Browning's attention (in 1881) to the alleged inconsistency; the poet had answered politely, but when he revised the poem later (in 1888–9) he wisely left unaltered what Lord Courtney called his 'error'.

I refer elsewhere (in the note to III. 1065-6 and in Appendix XI.) to other points in Browning's answer to Lord Courtney.

521. *Deep calling unto deep.*] Psalm xlii. 7.

542-3.] Luke ii. 29, 30.

549. *fox-faced this.*] Cf. X. 880-81 :—

> This fox-faced horrible priest, this brother-brute
> The Abate.

552. *making as they were priests.*] Cf. VI. 1940, 'makes as it were love'.

553. *Canon Girolamo.*] See note on II. 500-503.

554-5.] It does not appear from the records that it was at the instance of his brothers that Guido pushed his fortunes at Rome.

564. *what foul rite.*] See below, 573-4.

567. *the Prince o' the Power of the Air.*] A designation of Satan in Ephesians ii. 2; see below, 597, and *The Inn Album*, pp. 111, 126. 'It was the general belief of St. Paul's time that through the Fall the whole world had become subject to evil spirits, who had their dwelling in the air, and were under the control of Satan as their prince' (Dean Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 49).

572. *Mopping and mowing.*] Both words mean the same thing, 'making mouths', 'grimacing'; they are found together again in VI. 1940 :—

> their hate
> That mops and mows and makes as it were love,

and in *Aristophanes' Apology*, p. 8. So in Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 4. 1. 47 (of Ariel's 'meaner spirits'), *King Lear*, 4. 1. 64 (of Flibbertigibbet). Carlyle (*French Revolution*, 1. 1. 4) says of Louis XV.'s courtiers during the king's last illness that 'like mimes they mope and mowl'.

582. *what of God?*] See note on VII. 300-301.

585. *like Saint George.*] On the comparison of Caponsacchi to St. George see note on III. 1065-6.

593. *dusk.*] For 'dusk' as adjective (common in poetry) cf. *Sordello*, I. 391, III. 122; in *Paracelsus* Browning has 'duskest'.

593 *seqq.*] For an interesting use of this passage see Professor Raleigh's *Shakespeare*, p. 16.

593-600.] Satan, 'the Prince o' the Power of the Air' (cf. 567), aims at confining human life beneath a roof or grate which will prevent 'God-glimpses'; it is the function of his messenger, 'the angel of this life', to see to it that his master's aim is realized. 'Earth's roof', however, proves also to be 'heaven's floor'; there is in that roof an outlet through which, in spite of Satan, we may (with effort) reach that floor. (Cf. *The Inn Album*, p. 126: 'prison-roof Shall break one day and Heaven beam overhead!')—In Browning's view, though there is but a hint of the thought here, Satan and his messenger subserve God's purpose; if our life was not roofed over, if aspiration involved no striving, life would not be 'probation'. See note on X. 1375 *seqq.*

604 *seqq.*] All this about the 'solitary villa' and the 'lone garden-quarter' is a mistake; see Appendix II.—On many of the incidents described here and elsewhere in Book I. I reserve comment until we come to fuller accounts of them in later Books.

611. *were-wolves.*] 'Were-wolf'=German *währwolf*; *wer* (*währ*) ='man'; cf. 'weregild', money paid for a man killed. There was a widespread superstition that men of ravenous appetite might prowl at night in wolfish form. Cf. Greek λυκάνθρωπος, French *loup-garou*. See further in *Shakespeare's England*, i. p. 519.

631-4.] Note in this simile the splendid line 633.—*Detailed* illustrations from Nature are infrequent in *The Ring and the Book*; 'the human passion of the matter is so great that it swallows up all Browning's interest' (Stopford Brooke, *Browning*, p. 105); as Landor somewhere says, 'similes'—he means formal elaborated similes—'sadly interfere with passion'. Mr. Brooke notes that Caponsacchi, for instance, does not use a single (detailed) illustration from nature, and that the only person who uses such illustrations is the meditative Pope; for whose similes see note on X. 620 *seqq.*

638. *over Tophet.*] For Tophet see *e.g.* Isaiah xxx. 38.—The 'ray' of line 635 transfixed the criminals like a spear; it held them suspended and quivering over the mouth of the burning pit (653-4) until the Pope (648) decreed their doom. For the use of 'palpitating' see III. 1166.

644. *love as well as make a lie.*] But in 847, 852, 883 the 'by-standers' of 642 ('Half-Rome' and 'The Other Half-Rome') are said to be 'feeling after truth'; they are 'honest enough' (848, 851).

645. *discoursed the right and wrong.*] Cf. XI. 243, 'discoursed this platter'. The transitive use of the verb is 'now archaic' (*N.E.D.*).

667 *seqq.*] Cf. 417 *seqq.*

670. *entablature.*] The word, which in strictness means all that rests on the columns in classical architecture, including architrave, frieze, and cornice, here denotes the abacus (see next note). In *The Bishop orders his Tomb* the entablature is the slab on which the bishop is to lie in effigy.

676. *this abacus.*] The abacus is the uppermost member of the capital of a column; in the Greek orders, as generally in Norman architecture, it is square like the Old Yellow Book (677).

678. *the style*], *i.e.* the pillar (664).

684.] Cf. 14-17 above. 'Favoured' means ornamented as described in 16.

685. *the renovating wash O' the water*] which effects the 'repristination' of line 23, where, however, the agent in repristination is 'a spirt O' the proper fiery acid'.

691. *And these are letters.*] *O. Y. B.* ccxxxv.-xli., *E. L.* 235-8; see Introduction to Book XII.

702. *malleolable.*] *Malleus* = 'hammer', *malleolus* = 'little hammer'; 'malleolable' (coined by Browning) is therefore more suitable here than the usual 'malleable', the workmanship of the poet's fancy being delicate like that required in fashioning an Etruscan ring.

703. *the gold was not mine*], *i.e.* '*which* was not mine'. In modern English the relative pronoun is of course often omitted when it would be the object of its clause, but rarely when it would be its subject. In Shakespeare this latter omission is frequent (*e.g. Sonnets* 4. 4, 'being frank she lends to those are free'), in Browning it is perpetual: it occurs for instance six times in the first 75 lines of Book IX. The reader will often find in this omission the solution of his difficulties in long and involved sentences.

706. *thishow.*] Cf. 'thiswise' (Epilogue to *Parleyings*).

720-21.] God's high prerogative of creating what he conceives cannot be delegated to man.

730. *with too much life*], *i.e.* with so much fire in it that it has burnt itself out. The thought is illustrated by the first paragraph of Book XII.

737. *Stationed for temple-service.*] The metaphor was, I suppose, suggested by 'the lamp of God in the temple of the Lord' of 1 Samuel iii. 3, Exodus xxvii. 20, 21, which was relighted daily.—The poet means that forgotten or half-forgotten facts of the past which have a value for the present should be revivified.

741. *portioned in the scale.*] Cf. 718 above.

747. *More insight and more outsight.*] For the very useful but now disused word 'outsight' *N.E.D.* quotes from a writer of the year 1605: 'If a man have not both his Insight and his Outsight, he may pay home for his blindnesse'.

755-6. *put old powers to play, etc.*], *i.e.* rouse to its old activity the now half-lifeless matter, extend to their old limits the outlines of the now shrunken mass, upon which I 'chance' in my 'pilgrimage'. With 'to the limit' cf. X. 484.

760. *why Faust? Was not Elisha once?*] The 'mage' or poet is more fitly compared with Elisha (2 Kings iv. 8-37) than with Faust, for it is God who helps him.

769. *to and fro the house.*] 'Fro' was a preposition in Shakespeare's time, but he does not, I think, use 'to and fro' prepositionally.

774. *medicinable.*] Used actively, as in *Othello* (5. 2. 351) and in *Troilus and Cressida* (1. 3. 91): 'whose [the sun's] medicinable eye Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil'.

782-4.] The description is taken, almost word for word, from the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 266: 'Franceschini was low of stature, thin and pallid, with prominent nose, black hair, and a heavy beard, and was fifty years of age'. The last statement is disproved by the baptismal records of Arezzo, which show that he was just forty at the time of his execution (born in January 1658). See further in the note to II. 291.

792. *eight months earlier*], *i.e.* at the end of April 1697; the murders took place on January 2, 1698.

798. *Aged, they, seventy each*], according to the inaccurate statement in the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265); see note on II. 576.

806. *Injury to his honour.*] See note on VIII. 424-5.

816. *crime coiled with connivancy at crime.*] The sentence is ill-expressed. The 'monster' which curled from Guido's heart was his scheme to drive Pompilia into misconduct with Caponsacchi ('connivancy at crime'), and to make the misconduct a pretext for killing her ('crime') on the plea of injured honour. But the 'monster' which Guido alleged that Pompilia 'hatched and reared' was not, of course, this; it was a resolve on her part to be guilty of the misconduct.

819. *a month.*] See note on 241 above.

832. *he may get to bear.*] See note on IV. 1541.

833. *by voices.*] The words depend on 'to judge' (825).

836. *to all we seem to hear*], *i.e.* apparently, to all that, when we hear it, seems to us to be true.

838-1329.] Summaries of Books II.-XI. Note that each summary is itself summarized in its concluding line or lines.

841. *plump.*] So in the illustrated edition; probably a misprint

for 'plumb', of which 'plump' in the sense which it has here is a mere modern softening. Milton has 'plumb-down he drops' in *Paradise Lost*, 2. 933.

842-82.] Summary of Book II.

844. *Then, by vibrations.*] 'Then' is not antithetical to the 'First' of line 839. The world guesses (1) by the 'splash', (2) 'by vibrations'.

866. *with his previous hint.*] See Introduction to Book II.

868. *Æacus*] was in his lifetime, as king of Ægina, renowned for his justice, and after his death he became one of the three judges in Hades (Minos and Rhadamanthus were the other two). He is 'a type of impartiality'.

873. *a certain spectacle*], viz. that described at the beginning of Book II., the exposure of the bodies of Pietro and Violante.

874. *the church Lorenzo.*] See note on II. 6.

875. *the street*], *i.e.* the small Piazza in Lucina, which narrows towards the Corso; its 'mouth' is flanked by the two palaces mentioned. It is 'a favourite place for the lounger, since it forms a placid backwater to the rushing stream of the Corso' (Treves, p. 118).

883-909.] Summary of Book III.

897-903.] See notes on III. 118 and 462.

902. *caritellas.*] The word might, I suppose, mean small figures of the Graces (*Cariti* = the Graces), but are there any such figures about the Triton-fountain or near it? May Browning's 'caritellas' be a misprint for 'carretellas', the vehicles in which 'the motley merchandizing multitude' of line 903 has come to market?[1]

904. *three days ago.*] See Introduction to Book III.

905. *The frost is over and gone.*] Browning pictures the murders as occurring on a night which was 'oh, so cold', with snow falling (above, 606-9).

910-42.] Summary of Book IV.

911. *prelusive still of novelty.*] See above, 894-5.

925. *clarity of candour.*] Beware of the misprint 'charity' in the illustrated edition of the poem.

929. *breathing musk from lace-work, etc.*] Cf. II. 825, 'the musk o' the gallant', VI. 1877. The contemporary Dowager Lady Castlewood shakes the rich aroma of musk out of her garments whenever she moves (*Esmond*, i. 3, ii. 3).

935. *girandole*], *i.e.* branched chandelier.

939. *for observance' sake.*] Does this mean 'to pay respect to the speaker', or 'to note what he says', or (as is more probable) 'to observe the custom of quitting the card-table so that others may take a hand'?

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[1] Since I wrote as above Dr. Ashby has referred me to Thomas, *Un An à Rome*, Paris, 1823, p. 39: '*les voitures publiques connues sous le nom de* caratelle'. Plate LV. of this book, Dr. Ashby tells me, shows that a *caratella* was 'a sort of pair-horse barouche'.

943-1015.] Summary of Book V., with a digression (981-1014) on the use of torture.

945-7.] Browning has a charming passage on the 'appropriate tinge' of tongues of flame 'according to its food' in *The Two Poets of Croisic* (stanzas V.-VIII.).

952. *Tommati, Venturini and the rest.*] Hodell says that 'the usual custom in the criminal law of that day was to try before a single judge', but admits that the presiding judge at Guido's trial may 'possibly' have been 'assisted by a board of judges'. This, however, was certainly the case, for, though the advocates begin their pleadings with the vocative singular *Illustrissime et Reverendissime Domine* (the *Dominus* in question is described as *Urbis Gubernator in Criminalibus*), they address themselves as they proceed to a board of judges (see *O.Y.B.* xxxvii., lxi., clxiv., *E.L.* 37, 65, 172); cf. *O.Y.B.* ccxlv., *E.L.* 242, where, as Hodell notes, the sentence of the Court is called 'the judgment of this Most Illustrious Congregation'.

Browning speaks throughout of three judges (see *e.g.* VI. 8), sitting with the Governor as assessors. For Tomati and Venturini see note on IV. 1308-16.

954 *seqq.*] See Appendix VI.

962-8.] Most readers, at any rate at first sight, would say that the 'fools' of 962-3 are the Comparini, though Guido might be expected to call them criminals in this context rather than fools. They poured the blame of their wrongdoing upon Guido, alleging that his fraud, and not theirs, was the cause of all the subsequent trouble. But the 'folly' of 968, which 'calls black white', seems to be that of the judges, who in the Process of Flight practically whitewashed the defendants by imposing on them what in Guido's view were absurdly inadequate penalties. They thereby made it necessary for him to avenge his own honour, while yet they blame him for avenging it. Since the 'folly' of 968 ought to be that of the 'fools' of 962-3, it is possible that Guido is speaking of the judges throughout.—For some 'incisive' (965) comments by Guido on the judges see V. 1852-66.

963. *Satan-like.*] Satan blames Job in the Bible (Job ii.), but he does not pour the blame of his own wrongdoing upon him.

979. *the Cord.*] For the Cord, the Vigil, and other matters relating to torture with which the poem is concerned see Appendix VI.

985. *Religion . . . Humanity.*] 'Humanity' here is human nature, prompted by its instincts, but sanctioned or checked in its actions by the Church ('Religion').

991. *slave.*] He was Religion's slave (985-6).

997. *Let eye give notice, etc.*], *i.e.* allowed his eye to show a flash which suggested that there was a soul behind it.

1002-12.] When lay opinion at last denounced the use of torture as both vile and foolish, and 'broke the rack', the Church, says the

poet, professed, haltingly and unconvincingly, that, though she might have 'forgotten' to abrogate it, she had long since condemned it. She was, however, unwilling—perhaps she was unable—to cite chapter and verse to prove that this was so; she preferred to leave the book of her records closed. See further in Appendix VI.

1016-75.] Summary of Book VI.

1017. *the coil*], *i.e.* the entanglement caused by combining the two rôles.

1024-32.] See Introduction to Book VI.

1034. *at.*] 'To' (as in III. 1688) or 'against' would be more usual after 'excepted'.

1040. *To a short distance for a little time.*] To Civita Vecchia ('a half dozen hours' ride off'—V. 1339) for three years.

1052.] See note on IV. 1308-16.

1054. *waived recognition*], *i.e.* virtually but not expressly condoned; cf. VI. 9-24.

1063. *eight months since*], *i.e.* since May 1697; Browning calls the interval 'six months' in VI. 7.

1076-1104.] Summary of Book VII.

1081. *the hireling and the alien.*] Doctors, lawyers (1087), ecclesiastics, and merely inquisitive sympathizers—'too many by half'; see III. 39-65. Attestations by various persons who 'assisted' at Pompilia's death-bed were produced at the trial (*O.Y.B.* lvii.-lx., *E.L.* 59-61).

1085.] Browning was mistaken about the place of Pompilia's death; see Appendix II.

1105-1219.] Summary of Books VIII. and IX.; of Book VIII. in particular in 1124-61, of Book IX. in 1162-1219.

1118. *puissance*] is here trisyllabic, just as 'impuissance' is quadrisyllabic in *Saul*, XVIII., and at least twice in *Ferishtah's Fancies*; but in XI. 1007—

> Sire, you are regal, puissant and so forth—

'puissant' is dissyllabic.

Shakespeare has 'puissant' dissyllabic in *Richard III.* 4. 4. 434 and in *King Lear*, 5. 3. 216, and 'puissance' dissyllabic in *Henry V.* 3, Chorus: but in the same play, 1, Chorus, and in *King John*, 3. 1. 339, the latter word is trisyllabic.

N.E.D. notes that both words are always dissyllabic in Milton, but often trisyllabic in other poets; 'puissance' trisyllabic is especially common in Spenser (who however has 'puissant' dissyllabic in *Faery Queene*, 4. 15) and occurs in Tennyson.

1122. *too immense an odds*] against the 'helplessness' of 'common sense' (1107).

1128-59.] A long but easy sentence. The 'how' of 1128 is resumed in 1137 and in 1147, in which latter line it finds a verb at last.

1139. *efficacious personage*], *i.e.* cardinal; see note on III. 1471, 'the efficacious purple'.

1151. *whiffles*], *i.e.* puffs forth; the word is used for the alliteration ('wheezes law . . . whiffles Latin').

1153. *levigate.*] The Latin *levigare*, like the English verb, has the two senses of (1) 'to make smooth' and (2), in chemistry, 'to reduce to powder'. *N.E.D.* quotes the present passage as a solitary instance of the figurative use in sense (2). In *Christmas-Eve*, XVIII. 'levigable' is similarly used:

> when the Critic had done his best,
> And the pearl of price, at reason's test,
> Lay dust and ashes levigable
> On the Professor's lecture-table.

1159. *As he had.*] The use of 'as' for 'as if', common in poetry, is specially common in Browning, where it sometimes causes a difficulty in long sentences. The choice between the two is simply dictated by convenience, as in Shelley, *The Cenci*, Act I. Sc. 2:

> you look on me
> As you were not my friend, and as if you
> Discovered that I thought so.

See note on III. 754.

1163. *Leaving yourselves fill up*]. For the omission of 'to' after 'leaving' cf. XI. 342, 646.

1165. *clap we to the close.*] 'Clap we'='let us pass straight away'; cf. *Measure for Measure*, 4. 3. 43 ('Truly, Sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers; for, look you, the warrant's come'), *As you like it*, 5. 3. 11, *Much Ado*, 3. 4. 44.

1174. *To-morrow her persecutor.*] See XII. 664-735. The 'Fisc', which prosecuted Guido in the murder-trial, afterwards supported the claim of the Convertites to inherit Pompilia's property, made on the ground that she had been a loose woman. But there is no evidence that Bottini took part in these latter proceedings; it appears from the legal documents (*O.Y.B.* cclx., *E.L.* 253) that in them the Fisc was represented by Gambi, its Procurator.

1182-95.] On Browning's characterization of Bottini see Introduction to Book IX. The present passage is perplexing. How did Bottini combine caution and rashness? In what respects did he resemble the wrecker to whom he is compared? How, precisely, is the supposed wrecker supposed to act?—'Caution', it will be observed, commends 'Rashness' for being cautious.

1201. *scrannel pipe.*] 'Scrannel', in the sense of 'strident', occurs again in VI. 1000. The word is familiar from its use in *Lycidas* (line 124, 'their scrannel pipes of wretched straw'), where Milton imitates Virgil's *stridenti stipula*; its origin is uncertain.

1202. *studio.*] The Italian word, like the French *étude*, is used of a lawyer's office.

1207. *Forum and Mars' Hill.*] His 'studio' is his only *auditorium*—his Forum and Areopagus.

1209. *Clavecinist*], *i.e.* harpsichord-player.

1214-15. *From old Corelli to young Haendel.*] Corelli, the famous violinist and composer, was born in 1653, Handel in 1684. Handel was *not* 'i' the flesh at Rome' in 1698. He had wished as a boy to go to Italy, but 'could not find the means'; he first went there, and became intimate with Corelli at Rome, in 1706. See Hubert Parry, *Studies of Great Composers*, pp. 27-33.—Having adopted Handel we have long ceased to modify his 'a'; to his contemporary Addison he was 'Minheer Hendel' (*Spectator*, No. 5).

1219. *vindicates Pompilia's fame.*] See Introduction to Book IX.

1220-71.] Summary of Book X.

1222.] See X. 236 and Appendix VII.

1225.] On the pope's age see note on X. 166.

1250. *a huge tome, etc.*] The tome is a MS. history of the Popes; see the opening lines of Book X.

1272-1329.] Summary of Book XI.

1273-4. *skin for skin, etc.*] Job ii. 4. 'The meaning apparently is: a man will sacrifice one part of his body to save another, an arm, for instance, to save his head; and he will similarly give all that he has to save his life' (Driver).

1275-6. *gainable, And bird-like buzzed.*] An improvement in two respects on the 'gainable, free To bird-like buzz' of the earlier editions; as, for another reason, 'shone' is an improvement on 'come' in 1281.

1279. *rivelled*]=shrivelled: in *Troilus and Cressida* (5. 1. 26) it means 'wrinkled'.

1284. *that New Prison.*] See note on V. 324-5.

1297. *pried and tried.*] See note on IX. 1039-40.

1311. *the frightful Brotherhood of Death*] is mentioned again in XI. 2414-15 and XII. 129. We learn from the records that the Brethren arrived at the prison in the early afternoon (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265) of the day of execution and accompanied the condemned to the scaffold (*O.Y.B.* 224, *E.L.* 280). Story (*Roba di Roma*, pp. 514-15) describes certain Roman *Confraternità della Morte* concerned with *burials*; their dress and standard resemble those of 'the frightful Brotherhood' of which Browning speaks.

1319.] Psalm cxxx. i.

1325. *by the longest way.*] So as to make a deeper impression on the populace; see note on XII. 139.

1328. *Mannaia*] a kind of guillotine, the 'certain novel springe' described in XI. 179-258.

1330-47.] After the accounts given in lines 838-1329 of the contents of the several Books II. to XI. we expect, and the 'finally'

of line 1330 suggests, that the new paragraph will give us a corresponding account of Book XII. But it can hardly be said to do so; Book XII. cannot well be described as leading us back, 'by step and step', to mother-earth from the sublimities (and the depths[1], for we have been far away from 'heaven' at times, *e.g.* in Book XI.) of previous Books. Perhaps the paragraph is no more than the anticipatory dismissal of the reader at the end of the whole poem, but on that view the 'by like steps' of line 1334 is still a difficulty.

Professor Dowden (*Browning*, pp. 258-9) uses the metaphors of the passage when contrasting the noble monologues of Books VI., VII., X., with the worldly voices to which we listen *e.g.* in Books II. and III. 'For the valuation', he writes, 'of this loftier testimony [that of VI., VII., X.] we require a sense of the level ground, even if it be the fen-country. . . . The plain is where we ordinarily live and move; it has its rights, and is worth understanding for its own sake. Therefore we shall mix our mind with that of "Half-Rome" and "The Other Half-Rome" [II., III.] before we climb any mounts of transfiguration or enter any city set upon a hill'.

1342-5.] The lines suggest that the eagle, who, as Tennyson says,

> clasps the crag with hooked hands
> Close to the sun in lonely lands,
> Ring'd with the azure world,

would fain, on the return of spring, soar yet higher and confront the sun yet more closely with his horny eyes; but he dies with his aspiration unachieved.

1348-73.] Developing what has been suggested in the previous paragraph the poet explains and justifies his scheme and method. He might have selected ('saved') one aspect of his subject-matter and ignored all others, but he preferred to present it under all its aspects; from these various aspects, he says, a unity will eventually be evolved. Because Guido's action was alive it could be variously judged; a man's activities may sometimes reveal, but they often conceal, the motives which prompted them. Shift your point of view ever so little, they may have quite another appearance, and may perplex your judgment.—The paragraph might be expected to end with a further reference to the 'eventual unity' of line 1363—with an assurance that by viewing Guido's action in various lights we shall eventually be able to give a confident judgment upon it, just as Browning by so viewing it was himself able to give his 'sentence absolute for shade'; but it ends on another note.

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[1] Mr. John Morley, in an article in the *Fortnightly Review* (March 1, 1869) to which I have often referred, aptly applied to *The Ring and the Book* what Virgil (*Georg.* 2. 291-2) says of the tree which he calls *aesculus*:—

> quantum vertice ad auras
> Aetherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit

('pushes its roots as far towards hell as it rears its top to the airs of heaven').

1353-7.] Note the startlingly brilliant pictures, painted with one sweep of the brush, of summer and winter.

1367 *seqq.*] Whatever may be the literal meaning of the simile employed, its significance is clear enough.

1373. *shine or shade.*] No trick of language is employed more constantly by Browning than the antithesis of 'shine' and 'shade', both in literal and in figurative senses. Here are some examples :—

> The clock is vigilant,
> And cares not whether it be shade or shine,
> Doling out day and night.
> (X. 457-9.)

> There's a fountain to spout and splash !
> In the shade it sings and springs ; in the shine such foam-bows flash, etc.
> (*Up at a Villa*, Stanza VII.)

> In the core of one pearl all the shade and the shine of the sea.
> (*Summum Bonum.*)

> The facts abound and superabound :
> And nothing hinders that we lift the case
> Out of the shade into the shine.
> (IV. 5-7.)

> Dark, difficult enough
> The human sphere, yet eyes grow sharp by use,
> I find the truth, dispart the shine from shade.
> (X. 1241-3.)

> What though it [Goldoni's verse] just reflect the shade and shine
> Of common life ?
> (*Sonnet to Goldoni.*)

> Must the rose sigh " Pluck I perish ! " must the eve weep " Gaze—I fade ! "
> —Every sweet warn " 'Ware my bitter ! " every shine bid " Wait my shade " ?
> Can we love but on condition, that the thing we love must die ?
> (*La Saisiaz*, lines 309-11.)

> Well, the result was something of a shade
> On the parties thus accused,—how otherwise ?
> Shade, but with shine as unmistakable.
> Each had a prompt defence.
> (III. 1340-43.)

> Judge this, bishop that,
> Dispensers of the shine and shade o' the place.
> (III. 981-2.)

> A good thing or a bad thing—Life is which ?
> Shine and shade, happiness and misery
> Battle it out there.
> (*Ferishtah's Fancies : A Bean-Stripe.*)

(Two other examples occur in the same poem.)

Foiled by my senses I dreamed ; I doubtless awaken in wonder :
This proves shine, that —shade ? Good was the evil that seemed ?
(*Ixion.*)

So also 'shine' alone: I. 295 ('human promise, oh! how short of shine!'), VII. 1529 ('that heart burst out in shine'), II. 1194, VII. 1570.

1379.] See 410 above. When Browning was offered the editorship of the *Cornhill* in 1862 he wrote to his friend Story: 'They count on my attracting writers—I who can never muster English readers enough to pay for salt and bread!' (H. James, *W. W. Story and his Friends*, ii. p. 116). But in the same letter he admits, *apropos* of a *Selection* then printing, that 'people are getting good-natured to my poems'.

1381-5.] 'Whoso runs may read' is from Habakkuk ii. 2: 'The Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it'.—The poet pokes fun incidentally both at himself and at the literary world. In the old days (say of *Paracelsus* or *Sordello*), when his public was fit but small—indeed it was sometimes himself only—, it was not necessary for him to strain after lucidity ; now, when a larger public takes account of him, it *is* necessary. Meanwhile, if, in view of this larger public, he must take more pains to be lucid than of old, he is perhaps not so anxious to secure its approval as he was (and is) to secure the approval of the smaller ; his desire was (and is) to secure this latter approval by discharging a poet's true function, not to win popularity.

1386. *Such labour had such issue.*] 'Such labour' as is described in 1380-85 had its issue in *The Ring and the Book*.

1391-1416.] This famous invocation of the poet's dead wife, for all its tenderness and pathos, is what Dr. Furnivall called it, 'gnarly'; and, though Dr. Berdoe dispensed with explanations on the ground that 'there is no difficulty about the lines till we come to parse them', its gnarliness is not confined to its grammar. A careful 'Grammatical Analysis' by Furnivall will be found in the *Browning Society's Papers*, Part IX. ; a loose translation into French prose is given in *La Vie et le Œuvre d'Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, by G.-M. Merlette (Paris, 1905), pp. 344-5.

I have permission to quote the following passage from a letter written by the late Canon Scott Holland on the death of a friend :—

'Poetry wakes up at her touch, and it is hardly possible but that those who remember her will not know a little more of what is to be felt moving under the great lines, "O Lyric Love, half angel and half bird". The fluttering passion of the *bird* with the white flashing purity of the *angel*—the wonder, the strangeness, the delight of a visitant presence, caught and held in the body for a space, for our joy, and released to fly back in a rush to the home that was hers all

along, leaving to us the sense of swift passage, as of a bird, through a world that could not hold her, so that we are left startled out of our humdrum selves, knowing that we have entertained an angel unawares' (*Some Hawarden Letters*, pp. 185-6).

'When Nathaniel Hawthorne visited the Brownings in 1858 he described Mrs. Browning as "a pale small person, scarcely embodied at all" . . . "Sweetly disposed towards the human race, though only remotely akin to it"' (Hall Griffin, *Life of Robert Browning*, p. 229; he is quoting from *Italian Notebooks*, pp. 11-13).

1395. *a kindred soul.*] A soul as divine as the sun—'as life-giving, as pure, as bright' (Furnivall).

1397-9.] The long temporal clause qualifies line 1396; the humanity of the poetess at the call of any earthly need is contrasted with her lofty spiritual nature as pictured in the opening lines (Furnivall).

1398. *thy chambers*], *i.e.*, of course, her 'sanctuary within the holier blue'.

1399-1400. *to drop down, etc.*] Furnivall had Browning's authority for connecting these infinitives, not with 'summons', but with 'human'.

1401. *This is the same voice.*] The poet identifies his voice with that which summoned her before—the voice of humanity praying for the help. It is not possible to give a narrower interpretation to 1397-9.

1403-4. *my due To God.*] For Browning's conviction of his high function, by the discharge of which he must 'save his soul', see the notes I. 40 and XII. 867.

1407. *some interchange.*] 'Interchange' is loosely used for 'transfer'; Browning is speaking of the help given by the poetess to the poet. The thought of *mutual* help is foreign to the passage.

1413. *so blessing back.*] 'So' refers back to 'raising', with which 'blessing' is in apposition.

1415-16.] See Appendix IX. for interpretations of this difficult passage.

1415. *which, I judge, thy face makes proud.*] Is 'which' subject or object to 'makes proud'? In view of the interpretation of the passage suggested in Appendix IX. I prefer to take it as subject; so Zampini-Salazar, *La Vita et le Opere*, p. 77: *qualche biancore che a me sembri t' illumini d' orgoglio il viso.* Merlette and (I think) Furnivall take it as object.

BOOK II.—HALF-ROME

INTRODUCTION

The speakers of the ten monologues of Books II. to XI. are nine in number (for one of them speaks twice), and these nine, as Professor Hodell notes[1], fall into three groups of three. The first group consists of outsiders—of men in the street or in the *salon*; the second of the chief actors in the tragedy; the third of representatives of law—two advocates and the Pope as judge. The members of all the groups are concerned to express and to justify opinions about certain events, and to that end they must often narrate them; but the members of the first group are narrators primarily, they speak to people whose knowledge of the events is vague and who want fuller information. They give them what they want, but they give them opinions and arguments as well; so that their three monologues, like the two Italian pamphlets which probably suggested Books II. and III. to Browning, and on which those books are partly based, are *notizie*, not only *di fatto*, but also *di ragioni*[2]. Meanwhile they are, or they profess to be, primarily *notizie di fatto*, and as such they rightly come first in the poem. When these notices have been given other speakers can take many facts for granted, can ignore incidents in which they had no personal part or on which, for one reason or another, they do not care to dwell; they can do so without leaving the reader in the dark.

[1] *O.Y.B.* 252.

[2] These pamphlets, published at Rome—as we should say, in flat contempt of court while the case was still *sub judice*, are entitled respectively *Notizie di fatto e di ragioni per la Causa Franceschini* and *Risposta alle notizie di fatto e di ragioni nella Causa Franceschini*.

The relation of Book IV.—the third of the first group of monologues—to Books II. and III. is in one respect analogous to that of Book X.—the third of the third group—to Books VIII. and IX.; just as the Pope (*inter alia*) weighs the cases presented by the contending advocates to the Court, so the superior person of Book IV. sifts and weighs the conflicting opinions of the street. The monologue of the *salon* will be considered separately (Introduction to Book IV.); the two monologues of the street may conveniently be discussed together.

'Tis a very excellent piece of work: would 'twere done!' says Christopher Sly after sitting through the first scene of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Much the same judgment has been sometimes passed, not at quite so early a stage, but before the end is well in sight, upon *The Ring and the Book*. It is more than twice as long as the *Æneid*, just twice as long as *Paradise Lost*, nearly twice as long as the *Odyssey*, longer by one-third than the *Iliad*, shorter indeed, but only by one third, than the completed part of the interminable *Faery Queene*[1]; many critics, even admiring critics, have protested against what Lord Morley called 'its impossible length'[2], and perhaps, as Dr. Johnson said of the much shorter *Paradise Lost*, 'none ever wished it longer than it is'. Now pruning of the poem in detail might certainly have been effected without loss, though probably with less gain than some of us think; but suggestions have been made for excisions more drastic than mere pruning. Thus it has been maintained (1) that Guido should have spoken only once; (2) that the Pope should have been kept off irrelevant theology; (3) that one specimen of street opinion[3], and one of lawyer's advocacy, would have been enough; (4) that the men in the street and the lawyers should have been suppressed altogether. Of these propositions the first and second will be considered in the Introductions to Books X. and XI.; the third and

[1] The *Æneid* contains 9896 lines, *Paradise Lost* 10,565, the *Odyssey* 12,110, the *Iliad* 15,693, *The Ring and the Book* (in the later editions) 21,134, the six completed books of *The Faery Queene* 33,579.

[2] *Recollections*, i. p. 133.

[3] Professor Dowden went further; he would have had Books II. to IV. fused into one.

fourth, so far as they concern Books II. and III., may be considered here.

The suggestion that the opinions of the streets should have been voiced by a single speaker is surely infelicitous. The records prove that public opinion at Rome was sharply divided—you were Guidoite or anti-Guidoite ; if but one monologue had been assigned it, either half the city would have been silent or the views of both halves would have been more or less impartially expressed, with more or less lack of colour, by some neutral and therefore unrepresentative *bourgeois*. In the former case the principle of Browning's method would have been abandoned, for it requires that when there are two sides both should be heard ; in the latter the method would have been employed to little purpose, for each side can only be effectively represented by a staunch adherent. Browning's cleverness was equal to most tasks, and he could give interest to a monologue by a wobbler ; but how pale and tame a wobbler's monologue might have been in comparison with those of the stalwarts of Books II. and III.[1] !

The more drastic suggestion that neither half-Rome should have been given a hearing is less inconsistent, perhaps, with the principle of the poet's method, and it has found many supporters. Few of them, I imagine, would go so far as Professor Hugh Walker, who says in his decisive way that 'nearly half the poem'—he includes in that half Books II. and III. (as well as VIII. and IX.) —'is hardly worth reading'[2] ! But it has often been argued that the secondary Books weight the poem heavily, and that the monologues of Guido, Caponsacchi, Pompilia and the Pope, with the prologue, would stand out in bolder relief if the others were excised[3]. Now it was of course

[1] It may be objected that the speaker of Book IV. (*Tertium Quid*) is a neutral, and that nevertheless his speech is full of colour. But the neutrality (so far as he is a neutral) of the person of quality who there 'dissertates on the case' (I. 942) is dramatically appropriate, and owes much of its effectiveness to the non-neutrality of the two preceding speakers ; the colour of the speech, while partly perhaps due to that very fact, comes chiefly from a different source. See Introduction to Book IV.

[2] *The Age of Tennyson*, p. 229.

[3] Thus Mr. Sharp (*Life of Browning*, p. 127) wishes that the poem was of six books only, comprising 'but the Prologue, the Plea of Guido, "Caponsacchi", "Pompilia", "The Pope", and Guido's last Defence'. 'Thus circumscribed', he adds, 'it seems to me to be rounded and complete, a great work of art void of the dross, the mere *débris* which the true artist discards'.

the poet's main concern to lay bare the very souls of his chief actors, but it was his bye-concern to give them a living environment—to make his subordinate actors more than mere lay figures[1]—and to give his drama a vivid *mise en scène*, that of the social and ecclesiastical Rome of the close of the seventeenth century. To that end he lavished the resources of his art, his humour, his knowledge, his genius; so that quite apart from his tragedy of souls his picture is priceless[2]. But just as his scenery never diverts the minds of his readers from the great issues of his drama, so his secondary characters never stand in the way of his protagonists; Guido, Pompilia, Caponsacchi are more real to us from the lively presentation of the conditions and the persons that helped or hindered their doings, heightened or assuaged their sufferings; and this fact is, not indeed the only, but the chief and the sufficient justification of such Books as II. and III.[3]

Meanwhile most readers will be ready with their pruning-knives, for it cannot reasonably be disputed that repetition is a feature, and a blemish, of the poem; but it is a less prominent feature, and a less disfiguring blemish, than might be inferred from the current but misleading assertion that the poet tells the whole story at least ten times. In the Introduction to Book I. it has been urged as an extenuating circumstance that *some* repetition is necessitated by the multiple-monologue method; accept the method, and you must bear with the repetition. You can ask no more than that it shall be kept in check and counterbalanced by variety. Now nothing could stale the variety of Browning, and, if he does not reduce repetition to a minimum, he keeps it down with extraordinary skill. He makes a fresh speaker give freshness to a familiar incident by supplying some striking new detail, or by finding significance in an old detail which to an earlier speaker had none, or again, by distorting such a detail so as

[1] In some of his plays (*e.g.* in *Colombe's Birthday*) Browning fails to do this.

[2] 'Another force pushes its way through the waste and rules the scene . . . that breath of Browning's own particular matchless Italy which takes us full in the face and remains from the first the felt, rich, coloured, air in which we live' (Mr. Henry James in the *Quarterly Review*, July 1912, p. 79).

[3] Another function which they discharge has been noticed in the first paragraph of this Introduction; for a third—that of relieving the strain of the tragedy—see the Introduction to Book VIII.

to draw from it a new conclusion. Of his devices to secure variety many examples will be found if you compare Books II. and III. They both necessarily contain a full narrative of the story; the speakers belong to the same class; they both speak within forty-eight hours of the murders, while the sensation is still absorbing[1]. All this makes for repetition, but variety at once asserts itself. The place-colour of Book II. is given by 'the mouth of the street' by San Lorenzo church, in which the bodies of the Comparini were exposed; that of Book III. by the fountain and market of the Piazza Barberini. The representative of Half-Rome is a married man whose wife needs the marital check—the fact is his 'source of swerving' in his search for truth; the Other Half-Rome finds its mouthpiece in a bachelor who is prejudiced, it may be, by his sympathy with outraged beauty[2]; the latter speaker exhibits a reflectiveness and a sensibility which are absent from the coarser nature of the former. Their information on matters of fact, again, is often different. Half-Rome has heard a report of the home-life and of the financial position of the Comparini which does not agree with that which has reached the Other Half. Half-Rome speaks of the substance, the Other Half dwells upon the circumstances, of Violante's confession, and the motives which they assign for it are not the same. The former maintains that it was Violante, the latter that it was Paolo, who brought about the ill-starred marriage which only one of them describes in detail. The sordid quarrels of the Franceschini and the Comparini at Arezzo, summarized in some eight lines in Book III., occupy some sixty in Book II.; Pompilia's appeals to the Arezzo magnates and the Augustinian, passed over lightly in II., are a carefully developed incident in III. The Guidoite pictures Caponsacchi as a coxcomb, a haunter of houses of ill-fame, a Paris and so forth; to Pompilia's champion, though 'courtly' and 'no novice to the taste of thyme', he is above all else a man of truth and of rare dignity and resolution. A careful reader as he notes such differences

[1] The murders were committed on the evening of January 2; 'Half-Rome' speaks on January 3, 'the other Half-Rome' (probably; see Introduction to Book III.) on January 4.

[2] See, however, the Introduction to Book III.

between these two 'sample-speeches' will hardly quarrel with the judgment of Mr. Symons that 'no contrast could be more complete' than that which they present [1].

Three passages in the two Books will probably be found specially arresting; they all support the argument of the last paragraph. The first is the description of the exposure of the bodies of the Comparini, the hustling crowds in the church, the doddering 'Luca Cini on his staff', the brisk *curato* who does the honours of his exhibition to the Cardinal; to all this, which fills 200 lines at the beginning of Book II., there is but a bare reference in Book III. The second, at the beginning of Book III., sketches the scene at Pompilia's bedside, telling us of her visitors 'too many by half', of the credulous crone who 'chatters like a jay', of the great—the once great—Carlo Maratta, 'who paints Virgins so' and must paint Pompilia; Book II is silent about this. The third passage, one of the most brilliant of its kind in the poem [2]—it makes one wish that the wily ecclesiastic had been given a whole monologue—, is the Other Half-Rome's account of Paolo's visit to Violante and his bid for Pompilia; of this again there is nothing in Book II., for according to Half-Rome there was no such visit and at any rate there was no such bid.

In the Notes on this and the two following Books, which, as we have seen, are very specially *notizie di fatto*, attention is insistently invited to the relation between statements of fact by Browning's speakers and parallel statements in the Yellow Book. The poet's study of that book was constant and most searching. He read it, he told somebody, eight times through; it became his 'four-years'-intimate' [3]; he found a use for even its most trivial minutiæ; he declared that the story as he told it was the story of the book, and maintained that the facts which he found there entirely justified his interpretations of conduct and motive. A student of the poem must therefore, if he means to grasp its full significance, be also a student of the book [4].

[1] *Introduction to Browning*, p. 136.
[2] Observe in this passage the sustained use of indirect speech, an admirable vehicle, as Browning manages it, for Paolo's subtlety.
[3] XII. 227.
[4] See Preface.

NOTES

6. *Lorenzo in Lucina.*] The church is in the heart of Rome, just off the Corso on your right as you walk south. Browning found no mention of it in his Old Yellow Book, except in Pompilia's baptismal certificate (*O.Y.B.* clv., *E.L.* 159); but in the Secondary Source, which reached him later, it is important as the scene both of Pompilia's marriage and of the exposure of the bodies of the Comparini (*O.Y.B.* 209, 213, *E.L.* 259, 265). It therefore aroused his interest and he wrote to Rome for particulars about it (see Appendix I.). As he was never at Rome afterwards, the details about the church which are mentioned in the poem were no doubt supplied by his correspondent, who was Frederic Leighton (afterwards P.R.A.).

14.] Matthew vii. 6.

16. *The right man.*] Explained by 1542-7 below.

26-7.] This distinction is not drawn in the *O.Y.B.*, where it is said that Guido confessed to having given orders for stabbing *his wife* in the face (*O.Y.B.* xxii., *E.L.* 22).

41. *Not calm . . . as murdered faces use.*] 'To use' in the sense of 'to be accustomed *to do* something' (cf. *Fifine at the Fair*, CXXXII., 'you do not use to apprehend attack'), now found only in the past tense, was common formerly in the present also, as in *Lycidas*, 67: 'Were it not better done, as others use, To sport with Amaryllis?' Psalm cxix. 132, 'as thou usest to do unto those that fear thy name'; but is the verb found elsewhere than in Browning (cf. I. 1133) in the sense 'to be accustomed *to be*'?—Its transitive use for 'to accustom' (IV. 39, 'we've used our eyes to the violent hue') is now most unusual.

54-5.] See note on 6 above. The baptismal certificate gives the string of names: Francesca Camilla Vittoria Angela Pompilia (cf. VII. 5-7). She is often called Francesca in the records.

70. *clandestinely.*] An extract from the San Lorenzo Register, printed in Treves (p. 299), shows that Guido and Pompilia were married with all due form, in the presence of witnesses, by the *curatus* of San Lorenzo, on the morning of (Sunday) September 6, 1693; and that the banns had been published, without any declaration of impediment, on three Sundays in the previous July. The long interval between banns and marriage suggests a hitch; perhaps Pietro, having given his consent in July, revoked it afterwards; but it is difficult to believe that the marriage took place in the manner which the Register describes without his having finally consented. Yet three of the pamphleteers told their readers that he did not do so. Even the best informed of them, the author of the Second Anonymous Pamphlet, wrote: 'After having signed the said articles [about the dowry] Pietro absolutely refused to proceed to the effectuation of the marriage of the said Francesca Pompilia with the

said Guido, of whom he had had few good accounts. . . . The said Guido, scorning any further consent of Pietro and without his knowledge, contracted the marriage'; and the Secondary Source and the post-Browning pamphleteer say the same (*O.Y.B.* ccx., 209, 218; *E.L.* 212, 259-60, 271).

It must be remembered that two of these three pamphleteers wrote some time after the event, and that on some points they were certainly misinformed; but, even if they were all right in asserting that, so far as Pietro was concerned, the marriage was 'clandestine', the Register disproves some of the clandestine incidents introduced into the poem, such as the 'dim end of a December day', 'the unpleasant priest' who was 'not our parish friend', but was, or was perhaps, the Abate Paolo (see III. 449 *seqq.*, VII. 425 *seqq.*).

83-5.] In his letter to Leighton (see note on 6 above) Browning spoke of this 'famous Crucifixion by Guido'. Most modern critics do not greatly admire it (see however Hare, *Walks in Rome*, i. 45); it is certainly 'second' by a long interval to the same artist's Aurora, 'observable' on the ceiling of the Rospigliosi Palace.

104. *No stinginess in wax.*] Such as there was, according to the poem, when Pompilia was married; see 360 below, VII. 440.

115. *Barbers and blear-eyed.*] The shops of barbers and apothecaries (*tonstrinae* and *medicinae*) were proverbially places for gossip; the blear-eyed would be found in the latter. Hence Horace ('the ancient') opines that a particular bit of gossip is 'well known to every blear-eyed man and barber' (*Sat.* 1. 7. 3); cf. IV. 437.

122.] Cf. XII. 333 *seqq.*, where Arcangeli says that he sent his eight-year-old son, as a treat, to witness the executions in the Piazza del Popolo.

135. *She can't outlive night.*] She did live, 'by a miracle', for three days more.

147. *Triangular i' the blade, etc.*] From the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 264: 'Franceschini's knife was of a Genoese pattern (*alla Genovese*) and triangular, with certain hooks so made that in wounding they could not be withdrawn without such laceration as to render the wound incurable'. Cf. VIII. 1170, X. 743.

154. *the Cardinal.*] Browning meant Cardinal Lauria, who was Paolo's patron and is said to have helped in 'making the match'; but Lauria died in November 1693, two months after the marriage (Hodell, *O.Y.B.* 299). It appears from the post-Browning pamphlet that Guido had served another Cardinal—Nerli (*O.Y.B.* 217, *E.L.* 269).

159. *Curate*], *i.e. Curato*, parish-priest.

164.] The speaker professes to *know* that Pompilia has already 'confessed her crime', but in lines 1447-9 he only *hopes* that she may live long enough to do so.

178. *the philosophic sin.*] See III. 96 and Appendix VIII.

179.] Cardinal d'Estrées, the French ambassador at Rome, who

first championed Molinos and afterwards spied upon and betrayed him (see Appendix VIII.), 'book-made' on Molinism.

188. *the Ruspoli.*] See I. 876.

190. *A certain cousin of yours.*] See below, 937 and 1542-7.

192. *the handsel*], *i.e.* the first use. The word is used as verb in *Holy-Cross Day*, II.:—

> Shame, man! greedy beyond your years
> To handsel the bishop's shaving-shears?

202. *smiled.*] Substituted on the second revision for 'were'; so in 1338 below 'soothe' for 'be', in III. 963 'chanced' for 'was', in XII. 527 'brood' for 'be', in XII. 537 'lies' for 'is'.

203. *Via Vittoria.*] Connects the Corso with the Via del Babuino (III. 391-2); described in Treves, pp. 97-100: 'It was quite a fashionable, well-to-do street. . . . Some of the houses are so large as to be almost mansions'; Half-Rome calls it 'aspectable'. That adjective is now practically obsolete, but Mrs. Browning uses it both in its proper sense, 'visible' (*The Soul's Travelling*: 'the ocean grandeur which Is aspectable from the place'), and in the sense which it has here, 'worthy to be seen' (*Aurora Leigh*, p. 203).

206-7. *The villa—I' the Pauline district*] had no existence; see Appendix II. The house in the Via Vittoria was the Comparini's only home and was the scene of the murders.

257. *Pietro's estate was dwindling.*] See note on IV. 97 *seqq.*

260. *cat's-cradle.*] 'A children's game in which two players alternately take from each other's fingers an intertwined cord, so as always to produce a symmetrical figure' (*N.E.D.*). Charles Lamb says in his essay on *Christ's Hospital* that he and his schoolfellows amused themselves by 'weaving those ingenious parentheses called cat-cradles'.

275. *bounty of black hair.*] See note on IV. 456.

286. *Service and suit.*] The rights which a lord could claim from his feudatories; a very favourite phrase of Browning's, used again (not very appropriately) in 386 below; cf. III. 1248, V. 2019.

291. *younger . . . brother.*] Browning wrongly, but not unnaturally, assumed throughout the poem that Guido was the eldest of the Franceschini brothers; this is not stated in the Yellow Book, and the Arezzo Register proves that he was the youngest of the three, and Paolo the eldest (*E.L.* 289, Treves, p. 11). Paolo was born in October 1650, Girolamo in August 1654, Guido in January 1658. Their sister Porzia was born in January 1653.

304. *thirty years.*] A mistake; see note on IV. 392.

308. *concurrence*], *i.e.* competition, Italian *concorrenza*, French *concurrence*; 'competitors and concurrents' says Lord Bacon. For the use of the word in this sense ('now a Gallicism', *N.E.D.*) cf. *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*, IV.

318. *trimmed his lamp and girt his loins.*] From Luke xii. 35, 'let your loins be girded about and your lights burning'; cf. 1 Peter i. 13, 'gird up the loins of your mind'. Browning was fond of these metaphors; cf. *e.g.* IX. 29. No reader will forget his condemnation of 'the sin' of 'the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin' in *The Statue and the Bust.*

322. *that angler-simile.*] Above, 270-4.

336. *Carry you elder-brotherly.*] See note on 291 above.

349. *the threatened fate.*] Above, 263-5.

358. *one blind eve.*] See note on 70; cf. III. 449, 'one dim end of a December day', VII. 426, 'dark eve of December's deadest day'. In putting the marriage in December, which throws out the chronology (see Appendix III.), Browning followed the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 209, *E.L.* 259); for putting it in the evening he had no authority. The post-Browning pamphlet says that it took place 'one morning' (*O.Y.B.* 218, *E.L.* 271), which the Register confirms.

361. *some priest-confederate.*] 'Perhaps Abate Paolo', says the Other Half-Rome (III. 455), 'Paul', says Pompilia, without the 'perhaps' (VII. 437). The *O.Y.B.* does not identify him, but the Register shows that he was Ignatius Bonechi, the *curato* of the parish (Treves, p. 299).

382.] See Pompilia's account in VII. 489 *seqq.*

409.] So the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxli., *E.L.* 145), which says that the arrangement was advantageous to the Franceschini; the diligence of the Abate, and some temporary expenditure by their house, would enable them to gain greatly by it.

414. *with purple flushing him.*] Does this mean, 'financed by a Cardinal', who would lend the money necessary for the 'temporary expenditure'?

428. *Quoth Solomon, etc.*] Song of Solomon, iv. 9, 'thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes'.

443.] I can offer no explanation of this line; where do the 'tales' of 440 come from?

447-8.] Song of Solomon, ii. 5, 'stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples'.

457. *walk softly all his days.*] Isaiah xxxviii. 15; used again in VIII. 994 and X. 715.

471. *this black stone-heap.*] The palace of the Franceschini at Arezzo is no longer standing and the family is extinct.

473-4.] The meanness of the fare at the Franceschini's table is described in the sworn deposition of their servant Angelica Battista (*O.Y.B.* li., *E.L.* 52).

474. *verjuice dripped from earthenware.*] Sour wine in niggardly quantities poured from earthenware instead of silver. Angelica deposed that only one flask appeared at table, and that half or

more than half its contents was water. For 'verjuice' cf. Dryden, *Fourth Satire of Persius*, 73 :—

himself, for saving charges,
A peel'd slic'd onion eats, and tipples verjuice.

490-91.] See the servant's evidence (*O.Y.B.* xlix.-liii., *E.L.* 49-52). Bottini describes Beatrice as 'of true novercal type'—*immitis ac semper vt experientia docet implacabilis socrus* (*O.Y.B.* clxxiv., *E.L.* 181).

493. *mumps*], *i.e.* sulks, ill-humour ; a favourite word of Charles Lamb's.

500-503.] Girolamo Franceschini, whom the poem represents as the youngest of the brothers ('the boy of the brood', X. 897), was in fact, as we have seen (note on 291 above), older than Guido. He was, like Caponsacchi, a Canon of the Pieve church at Arezzo, where he lived with his mother. He is often mentioned in the records, where evidence is produced (1) that he joined with his mother and brother in treating the Comparini harshly, kicking the servant who protected them, offering violence to Violante—the Secondary Source, probably in error, says, to Pompilia—, and even threatening her life (*O.Y.B.* xlix., l., 209; *E.L.* 50, 51, 260); (2) that Pompilia told the Bishop of Arezzo that she was absolutely unwilling to live with him and his mother (*O.Y.B.* cv., *E.L.* 113)—Arcangeli, unsupported by evidence, says that Pompilia accused him of having tried to poison her (*O.Y.B.* ix., *E.L.* 11) ; (3) that he declared in the Process of Flight that before the flight the Franceschini had no knowledge of any intimacy between her and Caponsacchi (*O.Y.B.* lxxv., *E.L.* 81-2). But the most important passage about him occurs in a faked letter to the Abate Paolo (see 684-725 below and Appendix IV.) in which it was pretended that Pompilia wrote : 'My mother told the Bishop and Signor Guido, and then all over the town, that the Signor Canon my brother-in-law had made dishonourable advances to me, a thing never thought of by the same'. The story of the alleged advances, which this letter was intended to discredit, is taken as fact in the poem and emphasized as a terrible addition to Pompilia's troubles. See II. 1292-3 (where they are represented as prompted by Guido and his mother), VI. 842-6, VII. 808-14 (where Guido is said to 'see this, know this, and let be'), X. 896-909.

504. *Four months.*] See Appendix III. Of the 'probation' the fullest if not the most accurate account in the records is that of the Franceschini's servant Angelica Battista (*O.Y.B.* xlix.-liii., *E.L.* 49-53).

513. *gossip, cater-cousin and sib.*] Cf. *Fust and his Friends* (in *Parleyings*) *ad fin.*, 'thy gossipry, cousin and sib'. For 'cater-cousin' see *Merchant of Venice*, 2. 2. 139, 'His master and he [Shylock and Launcelot Gobbo] are scarce cater-cousins', *i.e.*,

apparently, are hardly on speaking terms. There is no ground for the current explanation, 'fourth cousins'. The word occurs again in *At the Mermaid*, VIII.

520. *flung what dues, etc.*] According to the Guidoite First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxliii., *E.L.* 147), with which the post-Browning Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* 219, *E.L.* 272) agrees, 'when they decided to return to Rome, as soon as they expressed their wishes, they were provided [by Guido] with money for the journey, and at Rome with furniture'. The Secondary Source says that Guido 'scarcely gave them what was necessary for the journey' (*O.Y.B.* 210, *E.L.* 260).

525. *Cursed.*] Substituted in the second edition for 'And the'; a decided improvement.

539. *Attained his eighty years.*] This is not quite consistent either with X. 166, where the Pope speaks of himself as 86 in February 1698, or with fact, for he was born in March 1615.

540. *held Jubilee.*] It is stated in XII. 59-62 that the Pope proposed 'to hold Jubilee a second time' if he lived till the December of 1698; what such a Jubilee would commemorate we are not told.

From the time of Paul II. (1464–71) ordinary jubilees have been held in every twenty-fifth year (the last was held in 1900). Extraordinary jubilees are also held on special occasions, *e.g.* on the accession of a new pope. These, it is explained, are not jubilees in the full sense, but only *indulgentiae plenariae in forma iubilaei*.

559 *seqq.*] All this is described more fully in IV. 145-91; see *O.Y.B.* ix., cxliii., *E.L.* 11 (where *lotrix*, 'washer-wife', is wrongly translated), 147.

572-3.] Proverbs xii. 4.

576. *the flagrant fifty years.*] So in III. 192 Violante is said to have been 'far over fifty', and in IV. 75 to have been 'fifty and over', in 1680, the year of Pompilia's birth; in I. 798 and II. 195 she and Pietro are said to have been 'aged seventy each' when murdered in January 1698.

The poet evidently based these statements on the Secondary Source, which speaks of the Comparini vaguely as 'two old septuagenarians' at the time of their death (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265); he overlooked or ignored the more exact assertion of the Second Anonymous pamphleteer that Violante was 48 in 1680 (*O.Y.B.* ccxii., *E.L.* 214)—which agrees with the San Lorenzo Register, where she is said to have died *in eta di anni 66 in circa* (Treves, p. 300). Pietro died, says this Register, *in eta di anni 69 in circa*.

580-83.] See above, 209 *seqq.*

606-7. *least—no!*] Even the Guidoite pamphleteer does not claim such financial disinterestedness for Guido; see *O.Y.B.* cxliii.-iv., *E.L.* 147-8.

640-50.] Guido is not represented as making this point in Book V.

658. *slanders written, printed, published wide.*] Cf. IV. 640-43, V. 764 *seqq.* The records often refer to these alleged 'slanders'; see *e.g. O.Y.B.* cxliv., *E.L.* 148, where we are told that soon after the return of the Comparini there was 'a copious distribution of *scritture* throughout Rome, which Pietro had had printed to the very serious prejudice of the honour of the Franceschini'. It appears from *O.Y.B.* xxxiii., *E.L.* 32, that the Comparini circulated 'most mordant writings' against Guido in Arezzo also.

672-3.] See the deposition of the servant Angelica Battista (*O.Y.B.* li.-lii., *E.L.* 51-2), and above, 473-4.

673. *six clamorous mouths*], her own and those of Guido, Girolamo, Pompilia, Pietro, and Violante.

676. *with stale fame for sauce.*] Has much more point than the 'with three pauls' worth' sauce' of the earlier editions.

684-725.] The letter here described is given in full in *O.Y.B.* lv., lxxxvii., (*E.L.* 56-7). See Appendix IV.

690. *qualified the couple properly.*] The letter speaks of 'their perverse commands, contrary to law human and divine', of 'their express command to murder her husband and poison his family', of 'their wicked counsels' generally. Browning originally wrote 'handsomely', but on the second revision substituted 'properly', a favourite word of his in the same sense; cf. *e.g.* XII. 112, 'Cardinal Bouillon triumphs properly'.

691. *hell, she said, was heaven.*] 'Now that I have not her who stirred up my mind I enjoy a quiet of Paradise'.

692. *peals.*] Cf. *Samson Agonistes*, 235, 'vanquished by a peal of words'; *Paradise Lost*, 2. 920, 'nor was his ear less pealed with noises loud'.

693. *Carmel where the lilies live.*] The profusion of flowers upon Mount Carmel is proverbial; but lilies are not specially mentioned in the Bible in connection with it.

696. *to this very end.*] Explained by what follows.

716.] The grammar of the long sentence breaks down here. '[Her parents'] last injunction to her had been that she should pick up a fresh companion, helped by whom she . . . having put poison . . . [having] laid hands . . . and [having] fired the house' ought to be followed by 'should scurry off'; but the speaker breaks off, and starts afresh with 'one would finish. . . .'

723. *But gave all Rome, etc.*] The letter, which is dated June 14, 1694, was no doubt produced by Paolo in the suit for the nullification of the dowry-contract, and so became public property.

727-8. *the Abate had no choice, etc.*] By 'a mandate of procuration', dated October 7, 1694, Guido appointed Paolo to act for him in all lawsuits to which he was a party (*O.Y.B.* clvii., *E.L.* 162).

735-44.] The civil suit referred to was brought by Pietro against Guido 'before Monsignor Tomati'; its object was to procure the nullification of the dowry-contract, on the ground that there was

conclusive proof that Pompilia was not Pietro's daughter; but in spite of the evidence of six witnesses to that effect Tomati decided to leave Pompilia *in quasi possessione filiationis* and left the contract undisturbed. Against this decision Pietro appealed 'to the Sacred Rota, before Monsignor Molines', but the appeal was still undecided when Pompilia died.

The facts are stated as above in many places in the records (see especially *O. Y. B.* ccxii., *E.L.* 214), but it is said in one place that the original hearing was 'before the Court of the Sacred Rota' (*O. Y. B.* ccviii., *E.L.* 210), and in another that the appeal was to the 'Segnatura di Giustizia' (*O. Y. B.* cxliv., *E.L.* 148).

For other references to this suit in the poem, see III. 646-87, IV. 1308-16.

749. *the double verdicts favoured here.*] Similarly the Other Half-Rome says that

> the Court, its customary way,
> Inclined to the middle course the sage affect.
> (III. 670-71; cf. III. 1379-80, 1395-7.)

754. *Counter-appeal on Guido's.*] Cf. III. 681-8; but Browning seems to be wrong in supposing that Guido appealed against this judgment or had any motive for so doing.

776. *something like four times her own.*] Pompilia was 13 at the time; Guido was 46 according to Browning, but in fact only 36. See note on 291 above.

787. *curls that clustered to the tonsure quite.*] Cf. 1217, where the speaker says that Caponsacchi was relegated to Civita 'to re-trim his tonsure'; VII. 911, 'whose tonsure the rich dark-brown hides'. 'Brother Clout and Father Slouch', priests of another type, are described as 'bald many an inch beyond the tonsure's need' (VI. 379).

788. *a bishop in the bud.*] Cf. VI. 258, where Caponsacchi explains how it was that he was 'bishop in the egg'.

792. *a saint of Cæsar's household.*] Philippians iv. 22. St. Paul's 'saints that are of Cæsar's household' were 'probably slaves and freedmen' (Lightfoot), but Half-Rome, like many of the commentators, takes them to be persons of high position at the imperial court.

794-5.] Browning often uses as an illustration the legend of the slaying of the Python by Apollo; cf. *Old Masters in Florence*, XIII., *The Two Poets of Croisic*, CXXI. The illustration is hardly happy here, for Pompilia makes but a poor Python; but the poet could not resist the temptation to 'Apollos turned Apollo'.

796-7.] Cf. III. 853-4:—

> This Caponsacchi . . .
> Was yet no friend of his [Guido's] nor free o' the house;

and IV. 935-8. These statements do not agree with the records. In the Process of Flight Pompilia deposed: 'Caponsacchi is not related in any way to my husband, but was certainly a friend' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv., *E.L.* 94), while Caponsacchi simply said that Guido was no relation of his (*O.Y.B.* lxxxix., *E.L.* 97). One of the lawyers, wishing probably to justify Pompilia's choice of an escort, says that Caponsacchi was related to Guido, 'as is supposed' (*O.Y.B.* lxi., *E.L.* 66).

801. *threw comfits at the theatre.*] An incorrect reference to an incident which Browning treated as of supreme importance. See note on IV. 944.

806. *a certain haunt of doubtful fame.*] See Introduction to Book VI., *ad fin.*

816. *At the villa.*] Guido had a vineyard with a house of some sort at Vittiano, a hamlet (described in Treves, p. 182) some nine miles from Arezzo on the road to Perugia; it was at this 'villa' that he enlisted his rustic confederates (*O.Y.B.* cxxviii., *E.L.* 135-6). The villa is often mentioned in the poem, *e.g.* in III. 309, 1575, V. 253, 364, 1006, 1142.

821 *seqq.*] Caponsacchi as fox takes the place of the horned and hoofed Satan of 770-72.

824. Mum *here and* budget *there.*] Cf. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, 5. 2. 5, 'We have a nay-word [pass-word] how to know one another: I . . . cry "mum"; she cries "budget"'. The *N.E.D.* suggests that 'mumbudget' was 'perhaps originally the name of a children's game in which silence was required'; it quotes from a writer of 1564 'nowe ye playe mumme budget and scilence glumme', and from another of 1622 'I was Mum-budget and durst not open my lips'.

825. *The musk o' the gallant.*] Cf. I. 928-9, 'some man of quality . . . breathing musk from lace-work and brocade'; VI. 1877.

832. *horn-madness.*] Applied originally, says *N.E.D.*, to horned beasts enraged to the point of threatening one another with their horns (cf. Virgil's *irasci in cornua*), but sometimes applied by word-play to the rage of a cuckold; see *Comedy of Errors*, 2. 1. 57:—

> *D.* Why, mistress, sure my master is horn-mad.
> *A.* Horn-mad, thou villain?
> *D.* I mean not cuckold-mad: but, sure, he is stark mad.

'To give a man horns' (κέρατα ποιεῖν τινι) was a Greek proverbial phrase for cuckolding him.

855-6.] See note on VI. 653.

866. *The fox*], who was Caponsacchi in line 838, seems here to include Pompilia; together they are one of the 'two parties' of 865.

877. *Had he to reconduct her.*] Browning's authority for this related to an earlier period, before Caponsacchi came upon the scene. See the letter of the Governor, dated August 2, 1694: 'when she

had been reprimanded by this most prudent prelate, he always sent her home in a carriage' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxi., *E.L.* 89); and that of the Bishop, dated September 15 in the same year: 'That she might not become even more exasperated I had her conducted home twice at least in my carriage' (*O.Y.B.* xci., *E.L.* 99).

888. *who was right?*] Guido or his friends? See the last paragraph but one.

889. *One merry April morning.*] According to the records that of Monday, April 29, 1697, but according to Browning, who changes the date intentionally, that of Tuesday, April 23. See note on III. 1065-6.

890. *After the cuckoo.*] The cuckoo is of course an early bird, so that 'waking after the cuckoo' would be an ironical understatement for late waking. The point here is that Caponsacchi is the cuckoo; he has been beforehand with Guido, cuckolded him, made him a wittol, and has now carried his wife off. Cf. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, 2. 1. 126-7, where Pistol cautions the jealous husband Ford:—

> Take heed, have open eye, for thieves do foot by night:
> Take heed, ere summer comes or cuckoo-birds do sing.

The cuckoo 'mocks married men'; 'cuckoo' is a

> word of fear
> Unpleasing to a married ear.
> (*Love's Labour's Lost*, 5. 2. 908-12.)

891-3.] It is stated in the Sentence of the Criminal Court of Florence that to prevent pursuit Pompilia put an opiate into her husband's wine at supper (*O.Y.B.* v., *E.L.* 5), and the alleged fact is often mentioned both in the records and in the poem. See Bottini's justification of it in *O.Y.B.* clxxvii. (*E.L.* 184) and in IX. 623-30.

894-6.] Pompilia was accused at Arezzo of having carried off money and other valuables, of which a list is given, 'from an *inginocchiatoio* locked with a key which she took from her husband's breeches' (*O.Y.B.* vi., *E.L.* 6). Pompilia says in her deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv., *E.L.* 93) that what she took from a *sgrigno* (Browning's 'scritoire') was her own property; see further in the note on IX. 653. Guido alludes to 'the effraction, robbery' as

> features of the fault
> I never cared to dwell upon at Rome.
> (V. 1907-8.)

899. *candid*], *i.e.* pure, as in IX. 475.

903. *of fifteen years.*] Pompilia (born in July 1680) was close upon seventeen.

909. *Spoiled the Philistine.*] Suggested by Exodus iii. 22.

910. *In company of the Canon.*] See note on VI. 1080-84.

934. *One Guillichini.*] Gregorio Guillichini was accused before the court at Arezzo of 'dishonest amours' with Pompilia, of having joined in persuading her to flee with Caponsacchi, of having taken part in the theft of Guido's property, and of having helped in conducting her to the carriage in which she fled. On these charges he was condemned by the Commissioner to five years in the galleys at Portoferraio (in Elba), but the sentence was modified by the Florence Court.

He is not mentioned in the depositions made by Caponsacchi and Pompilia during the Process of Flight at Rome, but in a letter written to the Comparini from Castelnuovo on May 3, 1697, Pompilia says that he was to have accompanied her in the flight, but that sickness prevented his doing so (see note on VI. 2024).

In the records of the murder-trial he is quoted by the prosecution as having said before the flight that Pompilia would be quite safe with Caponsacchi as there was no harm between them (*O.Y.B.* lxxiii., *E.L.* 80), and that Caponsacchi was going to Rome for good reasons. The other references to Guillichini in these records are to the same effect; he was related to Guido, and it is argued that his furtherance of the flight with Caponsacchi shows that he had no mistrust of him. Guido's advocates do not, I think, mention him.

Allusions to Guillichini in the poem (V. 1016, VI. 2028, 2036-40, VII. 1306, XI. 1666-7) are based either on the Arezzo sentence or on Pompilia's letter.

943 *seqq.*] Full accounts of the journey are given by Caponsacchi and Pompilia in Books VI. and VII.

944. *Guided and guarded.*] The phrase constantly recurs in Browning, *e.g.* in V. 451, 816, VII. 153. See note on IX. 1039.

958. *Camoscia.*] A village 17 miles from Arezzo, at the foot of the hill on which Cortona stands. (The Cortona railway station, a mile and a half from the town, is near this village.) The speaker is meant to be incorrect when he says that Guido was 'too late by a minute only at Camoscia'; for the fugitives started at 1 A.M., and Guido didn't wake till near noonday (890). See the next note.

959. *Chiusi.*] Browning was well acquainted with the road from Arezzo to Foligno and Rome, for he had often driven over it at his leisure (see note on VI. 1176 *seqq.*). He must therefore have known what Half-Rome did not know, that the fugitives went nowhere near Chiusi.

966-7.] See note on VI. 1398.

972. *at early evening.*] On the very important question of the time of the arrival at Castelnuovo see note on VII. 1580-84.

978.] See note on VI. 1401.

999. *flung the cassock far, etc.*] See VI. 1120-22, where Caponsacchi instructs his servant before the journey:—

> Provide me with a laic dress ! . . .
> See there's a sword in case of accident.

In *O.Y.B.* cxi. (*E.L.* 119) Arcangeli maintains that the fact that Caponsacchi, though an ecclesiastic, was dressed in 'laic clothes' (*vestibus laycalibus indutus*) 'brings no small weight to the proof of adultery'. To which Bottini replies (*O.Y.B.* clxxix.-clxxx., *E.L.* 186) that it does nothing of the sort ; for (1) 'as he is no priest'—'I am merely a sub-deacon,' said Caponsacchi in his deposition (*O.Y.B.* xc., *E.L.* 97)—such wear cannot be said to be forbidden him on a journey ; and (2) he may have worn it in good faith, 'to conceal himself and avert scandal'. Browning often refers to the point (*e.g.* in III. 1259-61, V. 1049-51).

1001. *over shoes over boots.*] *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 1. 1. 24, 25.

1011. *abashless.*] Used again in III. 897 ; apparently coined (on false analogy) by Browning.

1012.] Lamparelli brings evidence to prove that such an 'ingenuous protestation' was 'made by the Canon, in the very act of arrest at the Castelnuovo inn, to the husband himself, who there rebuked him for such a flight : "I am a man of honour (*galant' huomo*) and what I have done I did to save your wife from the danger of death"' (*O.Y.B.* cexlix., *E.L.* 246).

1018. *At Rome.*] According to the Second Anonymous Pamphlet the authorities at Castelnuovo sent the fugitives to Rome at Guido's 'instance' (*O.Y.B.* ccxv., *E.L.* 217), and the same thing is said in IV. 1118-21 ; but here and elsewhere in the poem (II. 1058-60, V. 1175, VI. 1575-84) it is Caponsacchi who appealed to Rome.

1031. *caught at the sword.*] The incidents of the scene, which would be a fine subject for an artist, were collected by Browning from various places in the Old Yellow Book. That Pompilia drew *a* sword and threatened Guido with it is asserted by Guido's advocates (*O.Y.B.* xvii., cxiv., cxxxi., *E.L.* 18, 122, 138), but they do not say that it was *Guido's* sword, as is stated in the poem (cf. III. 1163, 1291, VI. 1544, IX. 894, X. 1083) ; indeed they are inclined to deny, though sometimes they admit, that he had a sword (*O.Y.B.* cxliv., cxiv., cf. cxcix. ; *E.L.* 148, 122, cf. 203). Browning's Arcangeli admits both a sword and a pistol (VIII. 212-15). According to the post-Browning pamphlet Pompilia 'seized *Caponsacchi's* sword which lay upon the table' (*O.Y.B.* 221, *E.L.* 274).

1038. *pinked*]='pierced with holes' ; cf. *Henry VIII.* 5. 4. 50, *Taming of the Shrew*, 4. 1. 136. The *N.E.D.* quotes from Ben Jonson : 'By my head, I will pinck your flesh full of holes with my rapier'. Browning seems to play with the word, as though it had to do with colour ('With a flourish of red all round it'). Romeo and Mercutio play upon the word somewhat similarly in *Romeo and Juliet*, 2. 4. 61-4.

1041. *such invective, etc.*] Based on the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cexiv., *E.L.* 216) and the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 262).

1043-8.] So IX. 929-42; Caponsacchi gives a very different account in VI. 1560-63.

1044. sbirri], otherwise *capotari*, the papal police; called *birruarii* in the Latin of *O.Y.B.*

1055. *nose to face, an added palm in length.*] Cf. *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*, III., where, when the hopes of Léonce Miranda's relatives are suddenly dashed, we are told that

> Cousin regarded cousin, turned up eye,
> And took departure, *as our Tuscans laugh*,
> Each with his added palm-breadth of long nose.

'*Restare con un palmo di naso*, to be left with a long nose, *i.e.* to be disappointed in one's reasonable expectations' (Hoare's *Italian Dictionary*).

1068-76.] For these letters, alleged to have been found in the inn (or in the prison) at Castelnuovo, see Appendix IV.

1082. *He might go cross himself: the case was clear.*] 'Well? it is finished. Let us make the sign of the cross over it', says a character in Marion Crawford's *Casa Braccio* (c. xxxiii.). The author explains that 'the common Roman phrase' signifies 'that a matter is ended and buried, as it were', but he adds that its use 'jarred upon' the lady to whom the words were spoken; for her 'the smallest religious allusion had a real meaning'.

1127. *repugns give glance.*] The use of 'repugn' with an infinitive (with or without 'to') is not noticed in the *N.E.D.* It is one of Browning's frequent Gallicisms.

1131-2. '*Not my hand*', *Asserts the friend.*] See VI. 1662-5, note.

1132-3.] See Appendix IV.

1141. *fardel*] = 'bundle'; cf. 1126 above, 'the letters' bundled beastliness'. The word sometimes means 'burden', as in Hamlet's soliloquy (3. 1. 76). Cf. *Winter's Tale*, 4. 4. 727.

1183. *Nowise an exile,—that were punishment.*] Compare what Ovid says of his 'relegation', with which Browning often compares Caponsacchi's:—

> Adde, quod edictum, quamvis immite minaxque,
> Attamen in *poenae* nomine lene fuit;
> Quippe *relegatus, non exsul*, dicor in illo.
> (*Tristia*, 2. 135-7.)

1198. *those good Convertites.*] Browning confuses throughout (1) the *Conservatorio di Santa Croce della Penitenza*, also called *Le Scalette*, which is in the Via Lungara (*O.Y.B.* 211, 221, *E.L.* 262, 275)—described in Treves, pp. 126-9; and (2) the nunnery of *Santa*

Maria Maddalena delle Convertite, now pulled down (Treves, p. 104), which was in the Corso (*O.Y.B.* cclix.-cclxii., *E.L.* 252-6). It was to the former that Pompilia was sent by the judges in the Process of Flight (*O.Y.B.* cxlvii., ccxxii., *E.L.* 151, 223); the latter laid claim to Pompilia's property on the ground of its right of inheritance to the property of loose women (*O.Y.B.* cxxx., cclix., *E.L.* 137, 252).

The mistake is of no great importance except in relation to the Pope's severe (and unwarranted) animadversion on 'the Monastery called of Convertites' (X. 1494-1531).

1201. *patiently possess her soul*.] Luke xxi. 19.

1217. *re-trim his tonsure*.] See note on 787 above.

1221. *a like sufferer in the cause*.] Ovid was suddenly ordered, by an imperial edict in A.D. 8, to leave Rome on an appointed day and betake himself to Tomi (where Costanza now is ?) in the dreary region of the Dobrudja. Was he, as Half-Rome says, a sufferer in the same cause as Caponsacchi ? It was, no doubt, officially stated that his offence was the publication of his *Ars Amatoria*, but that had happened ten years earlier. Ovid's own hints on the subject (*Tristia*, 2. 103, 3. 5, 49) are mysterious; Boissier (*L'Opposition sous les Césars*, c. iii. § 2) suggests a probable explanation.

1222. *Planted a primrose-patch*], an oasis in the desert; but does the phrase imply that he followed 'the primrose path of dalliance' or simply that he turned out verses ? Probably it implies both (1223-7); but it is to his poetry that Ovid referred under a like metaphor when he wrote:

> Qui, sterili totiens cum sim deceptus in arvo,
> Damnosa persto condere semen humo
> (*Epp. Pont.* 1. 6. 33);
>
> Hanc messem satis est si mihi reddit humus
> (*Ibid.* 56).

—. *where*.] Civita, not Pontus, is the antecedent.

1230. *the aforesaid Convertites*.] See note on 1198 above.

1232. *like linnets o'er the flax*.] Linnets (French *linots*) are so called from the flax (*linum*) which is their chief food. The reference to spinning here makes the comparison specially appropriate.

1244.] The Pontifex Maximus had the full *patria potestas* over the Vestal Virgins; he could and did flog them with his own hand, if they neglected their duties.

1249. *of old Head-i'-the-Sack, etc*.] See the note on Caponsacchi's fuller reference (VI. 228-38) to 'Capo-in-Sacco our progenitor'.

1251. *to firk*.] *N.E.D.* quotes from a writer of 1567: 'I had firk'd him trimly, thou villain, if thou hadst given me my sword'. Cf. *Henry* V, 4. 4. 29.

1270. *Canidian hate*.] Canidia is the malignant sorceress of Horace's *Satires* and *Epodes*.

1272. *First fire-drop.*] We do not discover what this fire-drop was till we reach the next paragraph; the speaker loses himself in the circumstances which preceded its application.

1285.] See note on III. 1480.

1292. *Love from that brother.*] See note on 500-503 above.

1297-8.] See note on 727-8 above.

1306.] 'The scorpion's long slender tail is formed of six joints, the last of which ends in a very acute sting which effuses a venomous liquid' (*Imperial Dictionary*).

1323. *after full three long weeks.*] Caponsacchi was relegated to Civita Vecchia by a decree dated September 24, 1697, and it seems to be implied in the records that Pompilia was sent to *Le Scalette* at the same time; she gave her bond to keep to Pietro's house as a prison (*habere hanc Domum D. Petri . . . pro tuto & securo carcere*) on October 12 (*O.Y.B.* xcix., clv., *E.L.* 106, 159). This gives something between a fortnight and three weeks for her time at *Le Scalette*.

In III. 1490-91 it is said that she passed five months 'among the Convert nuns', a statement probably based on the assertion of the untrustworthy First Anonymous Pamphlet that she was at *Le Scalette* for 'some months' (*O.Y.B.* cxlvii., *E.L.* 151); this would mean that she was sent there soon after her arrival in Rome at the beginning of May.

Of the improbable '*six* weeks' of IX. 1227 there is, as Hodell points out (*O.Y.B.* 317), no suggestion in the records.

1331-8.] This passage was much altered (and improved) when Browning revised the poem in 1888–9. In the earlier editions he had written:—

> She had demanded—had obtained indeed,
> By intervention of *whatever* friends
> Or perhaps lovers—(beauty in distress
> *In one* whose tale is the town-talk beside,
> Never lacks friendship's arm about her neck)—
> *Not freedom, scarce remitted* penalty,
> *Solely the* transfer to some private place
> Where better air, more light, new food might *be*—

The words subsequently altered are printed in italics.

1333. *Or perhaps lovers.*] The insinuation is made in the First Anonymous Pamphlet: 'In the meantime [? late summer or autumn of 1697] Pietro Comparini, abounding with money furnished him with liberal hand by an unknown person, *perhaps a lover* of the young woman, was triumphing confidently . . . bragging moreover that she would soon be at home again in spite of the Franceschini' (*O.Y.B.* cxlvii., *E.L.* 151). A somewhat mysterious allusion in the Second Anonymous Pamphlet to 'that kind benefactor' who, moved by compassion, aided the Comparini in their

lawsuits, and to procure whose death Guido had laid plots (*O.Y.B.* cexxiii., *E.L.* 224), refers no doubt to the same person, who, the writer adds, had been at Rome while Pompilia was at Arezzo and could not be suspected of misconduct with her.

1342. Domus pro carcere.] See note on 1323.

1356. *gilded fly Pompilia-thing.*] Above, 270-74 and 323.

1361-8.] See Appendix II.

1376-7.] Cf. V. 1389, where Guido says that in the autumn of 1697 his wrongs made his wine 'acrid with the toad's-head-squeeze, My wife's bestowment'. The toad provides adulterous wives in Juvenal (*Sat.* 1. 70, 6. 659) with poison for their husbands, and it provides Horace's Canidia (*Epodes*, 5. 19; see above, 1270), as it provides the witches in *Macbeth*, with 'ingredients for her caldron'.

1383. *Gave birth, Sir, to a child*] on December 18, 1697 according to Bottini (*O.Y.B.* clxxxiv., *E.L.* 189).

1390. *what was a brain became a blaze.*] Cf. V. 1483.

1398. *clodpole*] 'blockhead', a favourite word with Browning as with Shakespeare.

1399-1400.] Luke xix. 40.

1408. *One final essay, last experiment.*] In the same way Guido describes and defends his 'Open to Caponsacchi!' as

> the experiment, the final test,
> Ultimate chance that ever was to be
> For the wretchedness inside.
>
> (V. 1626-8.)

Contrast the view taken by the Other Half-Rome (III. 1599-1619).

1433-5.] The rhetoric here (the 'wave', the 'filthy walls') was suggested by the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxlix., *E.L.* 152-3): 'looking upon the walls incrusted everywhere with his heaviest disgraces, the dams of his reason broken by his infamy, he precipitated himself, etc.'

1447. *At the Hospital hard by.*] A mistake; Pompilia died in the home of the Comparini. See Appendix II.

1464. *i' the New Prison.*] See note on V. 324-5.

1473. *civility*]=Italian *civiltà*. Cf. IV. 217, 'civility and the mode'; VIII. 743, 'the acknowledged use and wont'; X. 972; X. 1976-8: the 'new tribunal', says the Pope sarcastically, 'Higher than God's—the educated man's! Nice sense of honour in the human breast'; X. 2017, 'the spirit of culture'. See also VI. 156, note. 'Civility' requires, as some of these passages show, that husbands should be free to punish faithless wives.

1476. *Astræa.*] The goddess of Justice, who left the world when the golden age passed, but returns with the restoration of good government, of religion, of morals—and therefore, as Dryden said, with that of Charles II. Cf. *Ned Bratts, ad fin.*

1487. *male-Grissel.*] Griselda, the type of meekness and patience, comes from the last tale in Boccaccio's *Decameron*. The tale so delighted Petrarch that he translated it into Latin and told it to Chaucer when they met at Padua in 1373; Chaucer retold it in his *Clerk of Oxenford's Tale*.—In the earlier editions the line ran, 'Of the male-Grissel or the modern Job!'

1495. *by some Rolando-stroke.*] Cf. XI. 304. The allusion is to 'Durindana's trenchant edge'. Durindana was the marvellous sword of Rolando, the paladin of Charlemagne.

1496. *clavicle*]=collar-bone.

1497-1503.] Cf. 1140-45.

1547.] See above, 937.—Compare with the end of Book II. the end of the First Anonymous Pamphlet, on which pamphlet the whole Book is to a great extent based.

BOOK III.—THE OTHER HALF-ROME

INTRODUCTION

In the course of his summary of Book III. (I. 904) the poet says that the monologue which it contains was spoken three days after the murders, which would fix its date as January 5, and that date is possibly consistent with the 'since four days' of III. 867 (*depuis quatre jours*, counting in both the 2nd and the 5th), but it is inconsistent with other notices (I. 846 and 894, III. 36) which suggest January 4. There is a like ambiguity concerning the dates of the monologues of Guido (V.) and Caponsacchi (VI.), but such ambiguities are only important for the reason given in the Introduction to Guido's monologue.

The chief interest of the admirable Book III. lies in the contrast which it presents to Book II.; of that contrast I have already spoken fully. Here I will only suggest for consideration a point of subordinate importance. Browning says in his summaries that though both the speakers were 'honest enough, as the way is', they were both led astray by a 'prepossession', a 'swerve', a 'fancy-fit', which 'neutralized their honesty' and brought 'unsuccess' to their guesses after truth; or that if, in the case of the second speaker, some measure of success was attained, it was attained 'by no skill but more luck', the luck that by a mere whim he happened to take the right side[1]. I suggest that the reader may profitably consider whether in these summaries the poet does full justice to the representative of the Other Half-Rome. It is true that this excellent person, who shows a delicacy

[1] I. 847-58, 883-92.

and a gravity [1] which the first speaker lacks, has not always got his facts quite right—how could he, when the case had not yet been investigated and rumour was on many points his sole source of information?—and that we may detect in him some indications of bias [2]; but he has not taken a side, as Browning suggests, at random. His speech is not merely a more or less honest, and a more or less successful, attempt to get at the truth from the evidence before him; it is on the whole a very scrupulous attempt. He is on his guard against the prepossessions which Pompilia's sufferings have aroused in a compassionate, and her beauty, possibly, in an inflammable heart; he discounts most effectively the influences of this latter 'source of swerving' in 66-82, 865 *seqq.* On one crucial point at least—the relations of Caponsacchi and Pompilia before their arrest—he examines all relevant considerations with entire candour, giving full weight to those which make against his own conclusion. That conclusion is, as Browning says, that Pompilia is 'a martyr'; I am not sure that the speaker insists, as Browning says he insists [3], that she is 'a saint' as well [4]; he seems indeed to regard what Bottini calls the 'sainting' [5] of her as having been somewhat overdone. Meanwhile his conclusion is in a general way the same as the Pope's [6]; and though he probes less deep than Innocent and speaks (of course) with none of his impressive authority and wisdom, he is perhaps more careful about details [7] and readier to listen to the other side. But then the Pope, when he soliloquizes in Book X., is pronouncing an 'ultimate judgment' rather than sifting evidence; the latter process has, for the most part, preceded his soliloquy.

In the Introduction to Book II. I noticed two brilliant passages, descriptive and rhetorical respectively, in this Book III.; it contains others which make a different and a higher appeal—the self-vindications which the speaker puts into the mouths of Caponsacchi and Pompilia,

[1] See III. 83-90, 111-12, 137 *seqq.*, 220.
[2] *E.g.* in III. 1540-42, 1615-18, 1653-5.
[3] I. 909.
[4] See, however, III. 111-14.
[5] XII. 710.
[6] And therefore as Browning's.
[7] The Pope blunders badly on points of detail in X. 964 and 1494-1531.

passages worthy of their own monologues, and the lines (1527-38) which describe the dawn of the sense of motherhood in Pompilia, a subject which always evokes from Browning the most delicate and melodious verse[1].

NOTES

4. *the white hospital-array.*] Cf. 35 below, and see Appendix II.

5. *to frighten*]. *i.e.* to take fright: this intransitive use of the verb is not recognized by the *N.E.D.* Compare Tennyson's 'the shepherd gladdens in his heart'.

8-10.] From the Secondary Source: 'the unhappy Francesca Pompilia, notwithstanding all the wounds with which she had been butchered, implored and obtained from the Holy Virgin the grace of being able to confess' (*O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263).

18. *The Augustinian brother.*] Fra Celestino of Saint Anna's: *O.Y.B.* lvii.-lviii., *E.L.* 57-9.

25.] The full stop at the end of the line should be altered to a —; 'Who knows?' governs all the clauses from line 11 onwards.

30-31.] She 'cared for the boy's concerns' by making a will in his favour on her death-bed; arrangements 'to save him from the sire' had been made before, immediately after his birth (*O.Y.B.* cxiii., *E.L.* 121).

32. *with best smile, etc.*] The speaker exaggerates; see the 'attestations' in *O.Y.B.*

35. *the long white lazar-house.*] See Appendix II.

41. *Too many by half.*] See note on I. 1081.

44. *They took her witness.*] If such a deposition was taken no record of it has been preserved.

46. *'twas brother Celestine's own right.*] As being 'of Saint Anna', the supposed scene of Pompilia's death; see 798 below.

58-9. *Carlo . . . Maratta who paints Virgins so.*] Carlo Maratta (1625–1713), whom Arcangeli understood to be 'first in reputation' among portrait-painters in 1698 (VIII. 639), painted Virgins so often that he was called Carlo delle Madonne. He was 'for nearly half a century the most eminent painter in Rome' (E. T. Cook, *Handbook to the National Gallery*, i. p. 183), but his fame did not prove lasting. In his *My Relations*, published in 1821, Charles Lamb wrote as follows of his brother as picture-buyer: 'How many a mild Madonna have I known to *come in*—a Raphael! . . . then, after certain intermedial degradations . . . adopted in turn by each of the Carracci, . . . consigned to the oblivious lumber-room, *go out* at last a Lucca Giordano, or plain Carlo Maratti!' (*Essays of Elia*, Eversley Edition, p. 101).

[1] See Introduction to Book VII.

63. "*A lovelier face is not in Rome*".] That Pompilia was beautiful appears from two places in the records: *O.Y.B.* clxxx., *E.L.* 186, *mulier floridæ ætatis, et ut audivi non spernendæ famæ*—reputation for beauty seems to be meant (Bottini); and *O.Y.B.* ccl., *E.L.* 246, *venustam mulierem* (Lamparelli).

66-7.] See note on IV. 456.

96. *the Philosophic Sin.*] Cf. II. 178 and see Appendix VIII.

103. *the wind That waits outside a certain church.*] The piazza before the Gesù church 'is considered to be the most draughty place in Rome. The legend runs that the devil and the wind were one day taking a walk together. When they came to this square, the devil, who seemed to be very devout, said to the wind, "Just wait a minute, *mio caro*, while I go into this church". So the wind promised, and the devil went into the Gesù, and has never come out again—and the wind is blowing about in the Piazza del Gesù to this day' (Hare, *Walks in Rome*, i. p. 68).

118. *yon Triton's trump.*] In the centre of the Piazza Barberini, where the speaker is discoursing, stands Bernini's fountain of the Triton (I. 898-903), who 'blows from his conch into a sky a stream of pearls' (Story; 'sleet which breaks to diamond dust', Browning).

131. *composure*] composition, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, 2. 3. 251, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 1. 4. 22:—

> his composure must be rich indeed
> Whom these things cannot blemish.

Dryden uses 'a composure' for 'a composition' in the sense of 'an agreement' in his Introduction to *Absalom and Achitophel.*

155.] See note on IV. 97 *seqq.*

158. *our Pietro being.*] Double (or 'feminine') endings are rare in the poem, except when Latin is quoted; see note on VI. 1691.

176. *as before should go bring grist.*] 'Should go bring grist as before' in the earlier editions; the emphasis given to 'bring grist' by the change is an improvement, cf. 244 below.

179. *We have her own confession.*] Frequent reference is made to it in the Old Yellow Book, but no formal record of it is to be found there.

180. *'twas Jubilee.*] See note on II. 540. The Second Anonymous Pamphleteer writes (*O.Y.B.* ccxii., *E.L.* 214): 'Violante was moved by remorse of conscience and by the insults and injuries received in their [the Franceschini's] house, and was constrained by the command of her confessor on the occasion of the Jubilee to reveal to her husband Pietro that the said Francesca Pompilia was not their daughter but a supposititious child'.

184. *she harmed No one i' the world.*] The argument is developed by Pompilia in VII. 269 *seqq.*

187. *spouse whom.*] Substituted in the second edition for 'husband—'. When on revising his poem Browning found that

the omission of a relative pronoun in certain passages had made them ambiguous or was particularly harsh, he often either managed to insert such a pronoun, as here, or changed the form of a sentence, as in 846 below.

229. *having gained Pompilia, the girl grew.*] Browning is careless about the grammar of his participles; see *e.g.* 658-9 below. A particularly striking example of this carelessness occurs in *A Death in the Desert*, line 42.

234, 238.] There are two misprints here in the illustrated edition of 1898: 'silver' for 'sliver', and 'surmount' for 'surmounts'.

235. *tongue-leaved eye-figured Eden tree.*] The reference in this passage must be to a legend or allegory which I cannot trace. A friend suggests that the use of the epithets 'tongue-leaved' and 'eye-figured' was 'due to some allegorical woodcut of the early sixteenth century, representing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'.

244.] A change from the 'a light tuft of bloom towered above' of the earlier editions; see note on 176 above.

250. *when one day brought a priest.*] The elaborately-detailed account of the Abate's visit to Violante (250-376) is based on hints in the records, but represents the poet's 'fancy' rather than 'the fact'. Oddly enough the post-Browning pamphlet is the only place in the records in which it is said that the marriage-scheme originated with Paolo (*O.Y.B.* 217, *E.L.* 269). The First Anonymous Pamphlet makes the Comparini take the initiative (*O.Y.B.* cxli., *E.L.* 145); in the Second Anonymous Pamphlet and the Secondary Source Guido (with the help of 'a certain hairdresser'—see *e.g.* IV. 440) is himself the prime mover in the matter (*O.Y.B.* ccviii., 209, *E.L.* 210, 259). We hear in the Secondary Source of a visit paid to Violante, but it is paid by both the brothers (*O.Y.B.* 209, *E.L.* 259), and what passed at the interview is told very briefly.

253. *younger brother.*] See note on II. 291.

257. *A cardinal.*] See notes on II. 154 and on 407-8 below.

282. *Their house might wear, etc.*] There are many allusions in the poem to hopes of some 'bounty' (287) to be conferred on Guido by his patron-friend, but what form it is to take is not quite clear; it is to be such that it can be enjoyed at Arezzo (292-4).

287. *Some sparkle, tho' from.*] An improvement, made in the second edition, on the 'Sparkle, tho' from the' of the first.

309.] See note on II. 816.

324. *Unless by straining, etc.*] Ought he to interfere with Guido further than by arranging such a marriage as he desired?

325. *elder-brothership.*] See note on II. 291.

329. *happy be his dole*], *i.e.* may happiness be his portion! 'Happy' here is in emphatic contrast to 'great'. 'Happy man be's dole' has the same meaning in *Winter's Tale*, 1. 2. 163; else-

where in Shakespeare (*Merry Wives*, 3. 4. 68, *Taming of the Shrew*, 1. 1. 144, *1 Henry IV*. 2. 2. 80) it means 'happy he who succeeds!'

332-43.] It is not quite easy to find one's way through this ornithological passage with its phœnixes, sparrow-hawks, larks, cuckoos, eagles. 'If', the Abate seems to say, 'my simple kinsman, announcing his unworldly aims, sets about wife-catching in Rome, he will very soon attract and catch some bird which he will suppose to be a choice rarity, a veritable phœnix, but which, when he has it in his nest, he will find to be a bird of prey. For many a Roman mother is on the look-out for a husband for her daughter, and, having regard to Guido's name and credit, she will not be afraid that he is a mere snare such as Romans set for larks; on the contrary, she will without hesitation drop her daughter into his nest, and the daughter, cuckoo-like, will bring ruin and disgrace on the Franceschini brood.'—But then, the Abate sadly reflects, that brood has fallen from its high estate; no longer, as in crusading days (cf. V. 1419, XI. 2142 *seqq.*), does it 'send eagles forth'.

338. *lured as larks by looking-glass.*] The method of luring larks 'common amongst the Romans' is described in Story's *Roba di Roma*, p. 448. Browning, who revised this book for his friend the author in 1863 (Henry James, *W. W. Story and his Friends*, ii. pp. 143 *seqq.*), took many hints from it for *The Ring and the Book*.

375. *A certain purple gleam, etc.*] He had the air of a cardinal-to-be.—Paolo 'swam with the deftest on the Galilean pool' (II. 294) and high advancement had been confidently predicted for him from the first ('Paul shall be porporate', V. 227).

381.] See 244 above.

384. *the Hesperian ball.*] Compare Caponsacchi's fine use of the same legend in VI. 1002-9.

391. *into the square of Spain, etc.*] The Via Vittoria runs from the Corso into the Via del Babuino, having reached which you are close to the Piazza di Spagna.

393. *the Boat-fountain.*] At the foot of the steps leading from the Piazza to the Trinità de' Monti is the fountain called La Barcaccia—a stone boat of the shape of a war-ship, spouting water from its cannons—, the work of Bernini or his father.

396-401.] Cf. IV. 490-93. Based, like much else in this book, on the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccx., *E.L.* 212). Pietro, we are told, obtained 'few good reports' about Guido; the reports which he did obtain were 'very different from the presupposed riches and the boasted high position'.

401. *a cross i' the poke.*] A cross was on the reverse of all the silver coins of Elizabeth; the word was thence applied to a coin itself. Cf. *As you like it*, 2. 4. 12, 'I had rather bear with you than bear you; yet I should bear no cross if I did bear you, for I think you have no money in your purse'; there is a similar word-

play in *2 Henry IV.* 1. 2. 253. The word is common in the phrase 'cross and pile'; see note on V. 378.

403. *imposthume*] 'abscess'; used again in VII. 1145 and elsewhere. The Greek word ἀπόστημα (literally, 'a standing away from', hence a separation of corrupt matter) was used in this sense, and was adopted as a technical term in Latin, *e.g.* by Pliny. From Latin it passed into French as *apostème*, and was corrupted into *apostume*; a further corruption in its passage into English gives us 'imposthume', which is common in English poetry; it is used *e.g.* in *Hamlet*, 4. 4. 27. Bacon in his 15th Essay speaks of 'maligne Ulcers and pernicious Impostumations'.

407-8. *let go, said some, Shaken off, said others.*] 'Shaken off' according to the speaker in IV. 414 ('The Cardinal saw fit to dispense with him'), who follows what is hinted in the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccviii.): 'Guido was at Rome in idleness, out of the service of a porporate (*i.e.* cardinal), on the pay supplied him by whom he had till then maintained himself' (mistranslated in *E.L.* 210). Contrast Guido's statement in V. 1795 *seqq.*

413. *inched.*] A favourite verb of Browning's, used again below (617); it is applied in *The Inn Album* (p. 94) to the slowly spreading shadow of a tree ('The shadow inching round those ferny feet').

423. *Goodman Dullard.*] 'Goodman' is used in contemptuous protest as in *Romeo and Juliet*, 1. 5. 79.

439. *the playing Danae to gold dreams.*] The Danae of Greek legend was shut up in a brazen tower by her father Acrisius, whom an oracle had warned that she would bear a son who would kill him. Zeus visited her in a shower of gold, and she became the mother of Perseus.

445-50.] For the circumstances of the marriage, alleged to be clandestine, see note on II. 70.

452-3.] Cf. II. 104-5, 360, VII. 440.

455. *A priest perhaps Abate Paolo.*] See note on II. 361.

458. *witness the church register*], *i.e.* the *baptismal* register, a certified extract from which was produced during the trial (*O.Y.B.* clv., *E.L.* 159): it gives the date of Pompilia's birth as July 17, 1680. Believing her to have been married in December 1693, shortly before Christmas, Browning makes the speaker say that at the time of her marriage she was 'aged thirteen years and five months'.

If he had consulted the *marriage* register of San Lorenzo, he would have found that this was a mistake. See note on II. 70.

462. *yon lamb.*] The speaker is 'i' the market-place o' the Barberini', in view 'o' the motley merchandizing multitude' (I. 896, 903), with 'the shambles round the corner' (below, 467). It was not till the time of Leo XII. (1823 9) that the slaughter of cattle within the city was prohibited; he established public shambles outside the Porta del Popolo (see Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 378).

470. *Violante sobbed the sobs, etc.*] The scene, imagined by Browning, is described in full detail by Pompilia in VII. 487-583.

477. *surnamed "a hinge".*] 'Cardinal' comes from *cardo*, 'hinge'. In its ecclesiastical sense the word was first applied, as adjective, to the principal churches in Rome, then to those who governed them, the 'cardinal' parish priests.

481 *seqq.*] That 'Paolo's patron-friend' interposed in this way is definitely stated in the post-Browning pamphlet, which adds that the patron in question was Cardinal Lauria, and that he died soon after the marriage (*O.Y.B.* 218-19, *E.L.* 270, 272). Browning gathered his facts from two places in the records. The First Anonymous Pamphleteer says that the marriage-contract was signed by 'a Cardinal now defunct' (*O.Y.B.* cxlvi., *E.L.* 150; see note on V. 1801-2); the Second, that a Cardinal who was Paolo's patron interposed to reconcile Pietro to the marriage (*O.Y.B.* ccx., *E.L.* 212).

487-8.] 1 Corinthians xiii. 2, Matthew xvii. 20, xxi. 21.

495 *seqq.*] Contrast II. 404-6. Half-Rome speaks of the handing over to Guido of the Comparini's 'fortune in its rags and rottenness'; the Other Half-Rome of Guido's taking

> Pietro's whole having and holding, house and field,
> Goods, chattels and effects, his worldly worth
> Present and in perspective.

The former statement is based on *O.Y.B.* cxlv., *E.L.* 145 (First Anonymous Pamphlet); the latter on *O.Y.B.* ccix., *E.L.* 211-12 (Second Anonymous Pamphlet). 'An interesting illustration of the correspondence of the two speakers with the pro-Guido and anti-Guido pamphleteers respectively' (Hodell). See Introduction to Book II.

515. *orts.*] Refuse-scraps; the word is common in Shakespeare, see *e.g. Troilus and Cressida*, 5. 2. 158, where it is used figuratively with excellent effect.

522. *Four months' experience.*] See note on II. 504, and Appendix III.

536-9.] The Comparini, says the speaker, felt the remorse which fools feel, and thus acquired the wisdom which fools acquire, when they have been brought by pain to realize their folly. Fools start on the hither side of wisdom and may reach it through pain. Criminals are on the further side of it; they have lost wisdom with their innocence and cannot attain to it through pain and remorse. They will know nothing of remorse till that 'later day' when God at last passes judgment upon them.—The speaker is perhaps over-indulgent to Violante, who has been knave as well as fool.

544. *tributary.*] Their tribute of quasi-condolence takes the form of 'we told you so'.

555. *Holy Year.*] See II. 540.

567. *the great door new-broken.*] The door in the extreme right of the west front of St. Peter's, called the *Porta Santa*, is opened only for jubilees; at other times it is walled up. The ceremony of breaking it is performed by the Pope (see the description by Cardinal Wiseman quoted in Hare, *Walks in Rome*, ii. p. 167). He knocks three times, exclaiming *Aperite mihi portas iustitiae, etc.* ('Open to me the gates of righteousness,' etc.—Psalm cxviii. 19), and the door, 'having been cut round from its jambs and lintel, falls at once inwards'.

568. *muffled more than ever matron-wise.*] See above, 446-7.

570-71. *this the poisoner And that the parricide.*] Cf. VII. 1056-7 'rang changes still On this the trust and that the shame'; *Filippo Baldinucci*, VI., 'this their ground and that the farmer's'.

572. *Penitentiary.*] The left transept of St. Peter's 'contains confessionals for ten different languages. . . . By the pillar of St. Veronica, below the statue of St. Juliana, is an elevated seat ["the throne" of line 583], whence on high festivals the grand-penitentiary dispenses absolution' (Baedeker). See the woodcut in Wey's *Rome*, p. 295.

583-99.] See the passage quoted in the note on 180 above.

593. *contráct.*] Note the accent; the word is so accented always (I think) in Shakespeare, *e.g.* in *Romeo and Juliet*, 2. 2. 117, 'I have no joy of this contráct to-night'.

617. *inched.*] See note on 413 above.

619. *what did I say of one in a quay?*] See above, 491 and 519-21.

640. *When this great news red-letters him.*] Obviously ironical. The day on which the great news reaches Guido will only be a red-letter day to him in the sense that it will draw his blood when he 'tastes the teeth of the trap' (641).

646. *he carried case before the courts.*] Brought a civil suit for the nullification of the dowry-contract; see note on II. 735-44.

655. *six witnesses survived.*] *O.Y.B.* ccxii., *E.L.* 214: 'conclusive proof having been made by six witnesses who were examined, with the interrogatories administered on behalf of the Franceschini'.

658. *deciding right.*] For the ungrammatical participle see note on 229 above.

663-5.] Somewhat obscure; the meaning intended seems to be that *the original deception* (not, as stated, the recent 'one long lie') had both robbed the rightful heirs and shamed Guido (by marrying him to a base-born girl); and at the same time was not 'humanized' (*i.e.* made natural, however inexcusable) by Violante having at the time any grievance against Guido which called for revenge.—Later on, of course, after the marriage, the 'probation' at Arezzo did give her a grievance against him.

666. *that were too fantastic.*] 'That' is apparently the supposition that Violante's new tale was true.

670-71.] See note on II. 749.

681-8.] See note on II. 754.

682. *right is absolute*] and admits of no such compromise as the judgment of the court.

713-14.] *I.e.* how he might extricate himself from the dilemma of 701-10—might keep the dowry and yet be rid of Pompilia. Pompilia and the dowry were to be the joint means to his revenge, and were so far 'twined'; but he could untwine them by ridding himself of Pompilia in the manner explained in what follows. See especially 733, and cf. IV. 749-55.

738 *seqq.*] For the letter to the Abate, the contents of which are here summarized, see Appendix IV.

746. *complot.*] In Shakespeare 'plot' and 'complot' are practically synonyms; see *e.g. Richard II.*, 1. 3. 189. Cf. in the same play 1. 3. 174-5:—

> It boots thee not to be compassionate [=passionate];
> After our sentence plaining [=complaining] comes too late.

754. *As if it had been just so much Chinese.*] The first and second editions have 'As it had been just so much Hebrew, Sir'; by the revision we get rid of the pointless vocative. On 'as' for 'as if' see note on I. 1159.

789. *tenebrific*] occurs again in X. 1762; a favourite word of Carlyle's.

795-803.] *O.Y.B.* lvii.-lx., *E.L.* 57-61.

806. *silly-sooth.*] In *Twelfth Night* (2. 4. 43-9) the Duke asks for 'the song we had last night'; he says that it is sung by spinsters, free maids, and others, that it 'dallies with the innocence of love', and that it is 'silly sooth' (*i.e.* simple, unsophisticated, truth). [The song which follows ('Come away, come away, death') does not tally with the Duke's description, and has therefore been regarded as an interpolation.]

Browning uses 'silly-sooth' as a compound adjective, by which he means either 'innocent', 'unsophisticated', or 'easily deceived', 'foolish'. In III. 806 Pompilia is 'helpless, simple-sweet or silly-sooth'; in VII. 1603 the Comparini are, in Pompilia's judgment, 'silly-sooth and too much trustful, for their worst of faults'. In XI. 1228-31 Guido calls them

> too stupid to invent,
> Too simple to distinguish wrong from right,—
> Inconscious agents they, the silly-sooth,
> Of heaven's retributive justice;

in IV. 242 'the joy o' the husband silly-sooth' is Pietro's joy when he is fool enough to believe that Violante has borne him a daughter; in X. 2040 'silly-sooth' is coupled to 'inept'; in *The Inn Album* (p. 97) it means 'easily deceived by a trick'.

824. *you will find it hard*], *i.e.* hard to 'persuade the mocking world' (818).

837. *Here be facts, charactery.*] In Shakespeare 'charactery'—'writing', 'written letters' (*Julius Cæsar*, 2. 1. 308, *Merry Wives*, 5. 5. 77). 'Facts, charactery'—facts in black and white.

846. *A proper star to climb.*] Substituted for the 'A star shall climb' of the earlier editions; see note on 187 above.

850. *redness.*] The star is red on the horizon, seen through the haze, but attains pure brilliant whiteness at the zenith.

854.] See note on II. 796-7.

871-2.] An addition by the speaker to Fra Celestino's testimony in *O.Y.B.*

897.] After his long description of the 'abashless' (cf. II. 1101) Caponsacchi (884-96) the speaker begins his sentence afresh in a somewhat different way.

900-906.] What Caponsacchi is here represented as maintaining differs importantly from what he said in his deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxviii.-xci., *E.L.* 95-8.)

912.] Nor is the statement attributed to Pompilia consistent with her deposition. See, for all this paragraph, Appendix V.

967-70.] For these appeals to the Governor and the Bishop see *O.Y.B.* liii.-liv., lxxxi.-ii., xci.-ii., *E.L.* 53-4, 89-90, 99; and note on II. 877.

967. *soul and body.*] A great improvement on 'the weak shoulders'—the reading of the first and second editions.

972-89.] The general drift of this long and inelegant sentence is clear enough, and it is possible—barely possible—to explain its construction.

'This', says the speaker, 'is the ill consequence of a man being such as Guido is, that his hereditary friends, though disinclined to help him from their private resources, will nevertheless (if he comes before them in their official capacity, and if, as potentates in that capacity, they can befriend him without cost to themselves) help him (thereby discharging their hereditary obligations) by weighting the scales of justice in his favour. Only churls or Molinists would refuse to do that.'

But the speaker expresses himself clumsily. (1) The opening words suggest that the 'ill consequence' will be an ill consequence to one like Guido, not, as turns out to be the meaning, to the interests of justice. (2) The nominative ('born peers and friends hereditary') is separated by ten lines from its verb ('give' in 985). (3) 'Give help' in 985 has a deceptive appearance of being in apposition to 'do service'. (4) The passage is so punctuated as to suggest that the construction is completed by line 989 ('Why, only churls, etc.').

982. *the shine and shade.*] See note on I. 1373.

984. *Still potentates.*] 'Potentates' is in emphatic contrast to

'friend' in line 983, where the absolute clause ('friend's door shut', etc.) is concessive; hence the 'still'.—In the first edition lines 983-5 ran :—

> And if, the friend's door shut and purse undrawn,
> The potentate may find the office-hall
> Do as good service, etc.

'Seat' is better than 'hall', but otherwise the revision is not, perhaps, an improvement.

997-1000.] In his letter to Paolo, dated August 2, 1694, the Governor of Arezzo wrote: 'Seeing that they [the Comparini] were become incorrigible and the talk of the town . . . I threatened them with imprisonment and chastisement if they didn't amend' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxii., *E.L.* 90).

1005. *fast the friend, etc.*] See Pompilia's deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92): 'At the beginning of the said troubles I went twice to Monsignor the Bishop . . . but it was of no service because of his relations with my husband's house'.

1011. *coached her.*] See note on II. 877.

1015 *seqq.*] Pompilia's confession to the Augustinian is briefly mentioned in her deposition; she says that she told him all her woes and begged him to write to Pietro in her name, saying that she was desperate and was under the necessity of leaving her husband; but that she had no answer. Browning develops the incident (IV. 807-41, VI. 831-52, VII. 1282-1302, X. 1471-85); he represents her as confessing that she was tempted to kill herself (III. 1018-19, VI. 837-8, VII. 1283-5).

1024-7.] They had made the marriage in their own interest, without reflecting on the consequences to Pompilia.

1034.] Matthew xviii. 7.

1039. *all outlets, etc.*] See above, 780.

1065-6. *on a certain April evening, late I' the month.*] The evening was that of Sunday, April 28; the actual flight began in the early morning of Monday, April 29. The dates are fixed by the depositions of Pompilia and of Caponsacchi (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv., lxxxix., *E.L.* 93, 96, 97) and by the sentence of the Florence Court (*O.Y.B.* v., *E.L.* 5); on this point, as on many others, the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 262) follows Pompilia's deposition.

Browning, however, assigns the flight to the night of 'the last Monday in the month but one' (April 22), *i.e.* to the early morning of Tuesday, April 23 (VI. 1110-18).

Now the poet, as he said himself, 'took great care to be correct in all such matters'. 'For instance', he wrote in a letter to Lord Courtney (see note on I. 511-15), 'in order to be quite sure of the age of the moon on the occasion of Pompilia's flight, I procured De Morgan's register of lunar risings and settings for the last—I

forget how many hundred years'. Why then, taking all this care, did he ante-date the flight by six days?

The answer is suggested in VI. 1111; 'to-morrow', says Caponsacchi's servant on Monday, April 22, 'is Saint George'. All through the poem Caponsacchi is represented as a St. George to Pompilia; he is her 'soldier-saint' (VII. 1786); he carries her off 'in a glory of armour like Saint George' (I. 585; cf. VII. 1323-4); he must be 'potent', says Bottini (IX. 601-2),

> else, mayhap,
> That dragon, our Saint George would slay, slays him;

he is, he says himself (VI. 1771-2; cf. 1775-7), taunted as being

> The officious priest [who] would personate Saint George
> For a mock Princess in undragoned days.

It was therefore fitting that he should be made to rescue Pompilia from Guido on St. George's day, April 23, rather than in the following week.

1067. *Three years and over.*] From December 1693 (as Browning supposed—really from September) to April 1697.

1072-4.] See note on II. 894-6.

1097. *a servant.*] Maria Margherita Contenti; see note on VI. 1691 and Appendix V.

1140. *In a red daybreak.*] Pompilia's twice-repeated statement that she reached Castelnuovo 'at the blush of dawn' (*all' alba, al rosseggiar dell' alba O.Y.B.* lxxxv.-vi., *E.L.* 94) was certainly incorrect; was it, as a lawyer printed on the margin of her deposition, 'a lie' (*mendacium*)? For Browning's answer see 1187-95 below, and the note on VII. 1580-84.

1145-6.] Cf. VI. 1405-6; *O.Y.B.* lxxxix., *E.L.* 97.

1161. *Not for my sake but his.*] See Pompilia's development of the point in VII. 1585-1601.

1163. *The sword o' the felon.*] See note on II. 1031.

1167. *As you serve scorpions.*] Cf. VI. 670-71.

1186. *in all points but one.*] The depositions of Pompilia and Caponsacchi are inconsistent in *many* points; see Appendix V.

1201. *the last league.*] Castelnuovo was 'the last stage of all, last post Before Rome' (II. 962-3), from which it is fifteen miles distant (not twelve as in VI. 1426). Here, as in V. 1055, the distance is loosely said to be a 'league'.

1218-22.] Not a correct account of 'Guido's tale'. He declared that the fugitives spent a night at Foligno: '*hò hauuta noua, che dormirno assieme in Foligno nell' osteria*' (*O.Y.B.* cxxvii., *E.L.* 135).

1219. *where now you stand.*] In the earlier editions 'where your horse stands'; the change is a clear improvement, especially in view of the 'While we got horses ready' in the next line.

1224-5. *loop-hole to let murder through, But, etc.*] In the earlier editions 'loop to let damnation through, And', etc.

1233. *Perdue he couched.*] 'Perdue' (or 'perdu') in the sense 'in concealment', 'purposely hidden', was formerly very common in English; so in French *perdu* or *perdue* (according to the gender of its noun). Browning much affects the word, see *e.g.*:—

IV. 1286, 'the actors duck awhile perdue'.
IX. 564, 'intrigue there lurks perdue'.
XI. 1190, 'found what trap
The whisker kept perdue'.
Instans Tyrannus, III., 'he couched there perdue'.
The Inn Album, p. 99, 'I knew what lurked,
Lay perdue paralysing me'.
Sordello, V. 32, 'Lie we both
Perdue another age'.

The *N.E.D.* says that the word was 'apparently originally introduced in the French military phrase *sentinelle perdue*' (*i.e.* a sentinel on particularly perilous duty, see *King Lear*, 4. 7. 35); hence the feminine inflection (it was also sometimes written 'perdew', and, still more strangely, 'perdieu'). It is now, the *N.E.D.* adds, 'usually written "perdu" or "perdue" according to gender', but Browning follows the older practice; he has 'perdue' in all the passages quoted, irrespective of gender (and number).

1248. *baulked of suit and service now.*] Guido is for the present deprived of Satan's help. For 'suit and service' see note on II. 286.

1252. *this natural consequence*], *i.e.* that described in 1236-44.

1259. *in secular costume.*] See note on II. 999.

1265. *except death*], *i.e.* the death of Pompilia.

1281 *seqq.*] Based on the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cexiv., *E.L.* 216).

1290. *I told you.*] In lines 1162-3.

1308-17.] On the subject of the love-letters, and of the 'one letter' of 1316 (that to the Abate), see Appendix IV.

1322. *mouse-birth of that mountain-like revenge.*] Suggested by Horace, *A.P.* 139, *parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus* ('mountains will be in travail, an absurd little mouse will be born'), an abridgment of the Greek ὤδινεν ὄρος, Ζεὺς δ' ἐφοβεῖτο, τὸ δ' ἔτεκεν μῦν.

1330-33.] See note on II. 727-8.

1342. *Shade . . . shine.*] See note on I. 1373.

1353-4. *my worldly reputation . . . Being the bubble it is.*] *As you like it*, 2. 7. 152, 'the bubble reputation'.

1367-9.] The first and second editions have 'track the course' for 'trace the birth' in 1367; 'earth' for 'night' in 1368; 'night's sun and Lucifer' for 'night's sun that's Lucifer' in 1369. The

comma which appears in some editions at the end of 1368 should of course be removed.

1380. *A middle course.*] See above, 671, and note on II. 749.

1409. *unshent, unshamed.*] Etymologically the two words are synonyms. 'Shent' in Shakespeare (*Merry Wives*, 1. 4. 38, *Coriolanus*, 5. 2. 104, *Twelfth Night*, 4. 2. 112) = 'scolded'.

1411. *relegated (not imprisoned, Sirs!).*] See note on II. 1183, 'nowise an exile,—that were punishment'.

1425. *Had shot a second bolt.*] See note on IV. 1305-27.

1446. *the Hundred Merry Tales.*] Sir F. Kenyon says that the reference is to the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, but Browning would hardly have spoken of the 'last best' of that famous collection of precisely a hundred stories in so vague a manner; the last and perhaps the most famous of Boccaccio's hundred stories is that of Griselda. Dr. Berdoe thinks that the *Novelle* of Franco Sacchetti are meant; these Guido speaks of in V. 560 ('Ser Franco's merry tales') and again in V. 1153, possibly also in XI. 261 ('the Merry Tales').—The collection referred to is not the same as 'the Hundred Merry Tales' out of which Beatrice says in *Much Ado* (2. 1. 135) that Benedick has accused her of 'getting her good wit'; for that volume (reprinted by W. C. Hazlitt in his *Shakespeare Jest Books*, vol. i.), though it includes Italian stories, was of English origin.

1450-55.] Refers to the song of Demodocus (*Odyssey*, 8. 266-366), of which we have somewhat too much, perhaps, in *The Ring and the Book*; it is introduced again in VI. 1459-63 and in IX. 868-77; see the note on the latter passage.

1471. *the efficacious purple.*] 'Efficacy' (or 'efficacity') is often attributed by Browning to cardinals; in I. 1139-40

> More than one efficacious personage
> To tranquillize, conciliate and secure,

means 'more than one cardinal, etc.' Cf. IV. 470, 'Her efficacity my Cardinal.' In *Cenciaja* Browning says of the famous Cardinal Aldobrandini—

> great
> His efficacy—nephew to the Pope!

1471-7.] See the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxlvii., *E.L.* 150: 'The Abate, seeing the prosecution of the cause prolonged, had a just motive for carrying it to the feet of Our Lord [the Pope], with a memorial . . . beseeching him to appoint a special congregation for all the causes. . . . But having received no other answer than "To his Judges (*Ad Judices suos*). . . ."' Cf. the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccxxxv., *E.L.* 226). For other references to the appeal to the Pope in the poem see V. 1346-51, 1752-60, VIII. 1395-1426.

1475. *nephews out of date.*] See I. 318-23 and Appendix VII.
1480. *Made Guido claim divorce.*] Cf. Half-Rome, II. 1285:—

He claimed in due form a divorce at least.

These statements, like the fuller statements of Guido in V. 1247-54, 1309-18, 1807-15, refer to the year 1697, after the Process of Flight and the 'relegation' of Caponsacchi, of which a divorce-suit, brought by Guido, would have been a most natural consequence; but it does not appear from the records that such a suit was in fact brought.

It is stated in the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxliii., *E.L.* 147) that at an earlier time—viz. in 1694, after Violante's confession—the Franceschini had contemplated divorce-proceedings, but that, finding that the pundits whom they consulted were divided in opinion, they were unwilling to risk an undertaking of doubtful issue.

In his note on the passages referred to (*O.Y.B.* 318) Professor Hodell does not clearly distinguish between the years 1694 and 1697.

1487-8. *the blow That beat down Paolo's fence.*] Pompilia's confinement, which led to the murders.

1489. *mannaia.*] The Italian guillotine by which Guido was to die. See I. 1328 and Guido's elaborate description in XI. 181-258.

1490-91. *Five months . . . spent in peace, etc.*] Probably a mistake; see note on II. 1323.

1495-9.] The question, who was chargeable for Pompilia's maintenance at the Scalette, was discussed by the advocates (see *e.g. O.Y.B.* lxii., *E.L.* 66), and in the Anonymous Pamphlets (see especially *O.Y.B.* clii., *E.L.* 155), but nothing of importance to the poem turns upon it.

1519. *He authorized the transfer.*] A disputed point; Guido's backers denied that Paolo authorized it (for the fact would have strengthened the case against their client), maintaining (1) that 'all the preceding and succeeding circumstances proved it to be very unlikely', and (2) that 'the said consent is not found to have been registered'. They contended further that if Paolo did authorize the transfer he exceeded his powers as Guido's proxy, such powers relating only to matters of finance—a statement not borne out by the authorization-document (*O.Y.B.* clii., clvii., *E.L.* 155-6, 162). An answer to their arguments will be found in *O.Y.B.* ccxvi., *E.L.* 218.

1527-38.] This convincing explanation, which is developed with great force and beauty in Book VII., and is accepted by the Pope (X. 1072 *seqq.*), does not seem to have occurred to the lawyers; it is suggested nowhere in the records.

1540-41.] For 'the one step left' for Guido to take see below, 1571-2.—There is no evidence that such a letter as is here mentioned was ever written.

Paolo's departure from Rome is variously explained in the records. (1) According to the pro-Guido pamphleteer, when Pompilia had been released from the Scalette and was near her confinement, 'it seemed to the Abate that every man's face had become a mirror in which the image of the ridicule of his house was reflected; his mind, in other respects manly and constant, became dejected; he often burst into excessive weeping from grief, till he felt himself impelled to throw himself into the river' (cf. V. 1367-8); but ultimately 'he resolved to abandon Rome, the Court, his hopes and havings, his affectionate and distinguished patrons, and whatever property he had accumulated . . . and went off to search for some entirely unknown and foreign clime' (*O.Y.B.* cxlviii., *E.L.* 151-2). So also, with less rhetoric and detail, the advocate Spreti (*O.Y.B.* xxxii., *E.L.* 32; cf. the Secondary Source *O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 262-3). (2) The anti-Guido pamphleteer replies that, if men's faces served the Abate as a mirror, what they reflected was 'his own evil procedures', his attempts to extort a judgment 'by subtle insinuations, trickery and deceit'; and that he left Rome to have a part in planning the murders (*O.Y.B.* cxxvi., cxvii., *E.L.* 225, 219). (3) The post-Browning pamphleteer says that an unfavourable judgment on the conduct of the Franceschini led the Religious Order of Malta to give 'secret information to Abate Paolo that he should resign his office' of Secretary of the Order, and that his departure was due to this disgrace (*O.Y.B.* 221, *E.L.* 275-6).

The Other Half-Rome agrees, as usual, with (2), and makes Paolo partly responsible for the murders; but credits him with astuteness in planning to save his own skin (line 1572). So also, more explicitly, the Pope (X. 890-94):

> all for craft,
> All to work harm with, yet incur no scratch!
> While Guido brings the struggle to a close,
> Paul steps back the due distance, clear o' the trap
> He builds and baits.

1546-69.] Whether the legal position is here correctly stated is perhaps uncertain; the speaker follows (and expands) a passage in one of Bottini's pleadings (*O.Y.B.* clxxxiv., *E.L.* 189-90). Bottini asks himself the question, Why did Guido postpone his vengeance from October 12, 1697, when Pompilia left the Scalette and went to the Comparini's home, till January 2, 1698? He answers it by saying that 'he was waiting for her confinement which happened on December 18, in order that the succession, for which he was gaping, might be made secure'. Cf. X. 752-74.

1575. *Vittiano.*] See note on II. 816.

1576. *with one spark i' the clod.*] A favourite metaphor of Browning's; cf. *e.g. Rabbi Ben Ezra*, II., v. ('Finished and finite

clods, untroubled by a spark' ; ' A spark disturbs our clod'). The 'spark' here, as is immediately explained, is the loyalty of the rustics to their lord—a loyalty which was not deep, for they planned to murder him when he did not immediately pay them the stipulated reward (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265). The Pope, therefore, though he finds a glimmer of intelligence (X. 1495-6), can find no spark 'that serves for a soul' in these 'wretched lumps of life' (X. 925-64).

1583. *On Christmas-Eve.*] See note on V. 1581.

1584-5. *solitude Left them by Paolo.*] They lodged at Paolo's villa by the Ponte Milvio (commonly called Ponte Molle) about two miles north of Rome (*O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 263).

1586.] The insertion in the later revision of 'had' before 'disappeared' improves both meaning and rhythm.

1587. *A whole week.*] Browning, in a fine passage (V. 1582-1621), makes Guido explain the delay.

1594. *finger-wise*], feeling their way in the dark, *à tâtons*, *tastone*.

1595-6.] See Appendix II.

1599. *the excusers say.*] See II. 1407-30; it is interesting to compare the two accounts of the incident. The Other Half-Rome's account is based on *O.Y.B.* clxxxvi.-vii., *E.L.* 191-2.

1615. *since Guido knew, etc.*] How could he know? Here, as in 1653 below, we note the speaker's bias (I. 883 *seqq.*).

1622-4.] From the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263): '. . . Comparini, who was likewise wounded by one of the other assassins and was crying out "confession"'. Cf. IV. 1377-9, XI. 473-4.

1628-9. *They had forgotten . . . the ticket.*] Both the Pope (X. 802-33) and Guido (V. 1720-25, XI. 1627-48) dwell upon the strange omission, which is noticed in the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 264).

1633-6.] The allusions in the records to the flight of Guido and his companions are as follows:—

O.Y.B. x., *E.L.* 12 (Arcangeli): They were 'returning to their country by the direct way along the consular road'; Guido was found by his pursuers 'resting on a mattress (*in stragulo*) in a certain inn'.

O.Y.B. lxii., *E.L.* 67 (Gambi): They were 'found in the inn at Merluccia with fire-arms, and prohibited swords still bloody'.

O.Y.B. 212, *E.L.* 264 (Secondary Source): They were found and arrested 'at the tavern of Merluzza', 'having travelled afoot towards Baccano'.

(An allusion in the post-Browning pamphlet—*O.Y.B.* 223, *E.L.* 277-8—is less definite; the place of arrest is there described as 'an inn a few miles from Rome'.)

In the poem Merluccia (Merluzza) is not mentioned. The fugitives are said to have walked 'a prodigious twenty miles', and to have

been 'overtaken near Baccano' or a little short of it. There they were found asleep 'in a grange', 'in the first wayside straw', 'by the way-side, in some shelter meant for beasts', 'i' the straw which promised shelter first' (III. 1633-6, IV. 1394-9, X. 846-9, V. 1674).

The 'consular road' above mentioned is the Via Cassia, which splits off from the Foligno and Perugia road (by which Caponsacchi and Pompilia travelled to Rome) at the Ponte Milvio. It is the shortest route from Rome to Arezzo, but was not kept in proper conditions for carriages. See Treves, pp. 73, 155, and for Merluzza and Baccano, *ibid.* pp. 158-9. Merluzza is about 15 miles from Rome, Baccano about 2½ miles farther away.

1648.] Guido's defence was based solely on the alleged loss of his honour.

1650-3. *There was no fault . . . in the parents.*] See note on 1615 above.

1670. *you had three in play.*] See note on IV. 1305-27.

1672 *seqq.*] Suggested, like so much else in Book III., by the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccxviii.-xix., *E.L.* 220): 'This right [of killing his wife for honour's sake] ceases when the husband has renounced it by imploring the arm of justice'. Having laboured the point the writer quotes in support of his view 'a celebrated Canonist'.

1676. *oldest sinner*], *i.e.* 'one whose sin was committed very long ago', not 'a hardened, inveterate sinner'.

BOOK IV.—TERTIUM QUID

INTRODUCTION

In the Introduction to Book II. it was suggested that Book IV. stands in the same kind of relation of Books II. and III. as that in which the Pope's soliloquy (Book X.) stands to the pleadings of Arcangeli and Bottini (Books VIII. and IX.); the speaker in Tertium Quid sifts and weighs the opinions of the streets just as the Pope weighs the cases presented by the advocates. There, however, the resemblance ceases. The Pope sits as a judge without a jury, he pronounces judgment. Our man of quality sums up, arranges, methodizes; he leaves it to a jury—a very special jury—to pronounce. His summing up is essentially of what Dickens called 'the old established and most approved form' of English courts—a favourable example of that form, for its 'running comments on the evidence' are well digested; but it does not compel or persuade, or even help materially to a verdict. Unlike the Pope, again, the judge in the *salon* makes no attempt to trace back action to its hidden sources, to probe the souls of the actors; he disregards those deeper issues which to the Pope are primary and vital. For these reasons Book IV., for which, as for Book X., there is no suggestion in the records, might have invited special attack from the critics who insist that large parts of the poem should have been excised.

That it has been immune from any such special attack [1]

[1] It has, I have since found, been very specially attacked. 'General practice has long suppressed Doctor Bottinius' [Book IX.], writes the author of the notice

is no doubt due to its astonishing cleverness and distinction. If the speaker's summing-up is of the kind with which we are familiar, it is not merely (as I have called it) a favourable, it is a most brilliant specimen of that kind. The problems set by the evidence are, indeed, left entirely unsolved. Could Violante's fraud be condoned? Perhaps; but 'there's somewhat dark' in the matter; 'let's on'[1]. Which party cheated most about the marriage? It's 'a nice point'; 'decide who can'; 'suppose we leave the question at this stage?'[2] Were Caponsacchi and Pompilia guilty of misconduct? The question has 'faces, manifold enough, to ponder on'; the jury—'Her Highness' and 'Her Excellency'—must pronounce[3]. Was Guido right in usurping the functions of law? It is for the jury to say; 'there are difficulties on any supposition and either side'[4]. Do Pompilia's death-bed utterances prove her innocent? They are also 'explicable by the consciousness of guilt'[5]. The brilliant cleverness of the Book appears, not in any answers given to these difficult questions, for they are not answered, but in the force and lucidity, the apposite illustrations, with which the arguments for this or that possible answer are marshalled and vivified; note for instance the passage in which the speaker advances reasons, with the help of a most apposite parable (lines 233-41), which may be held to justify condonation of Violante's crookedness, or that in which he strips of its non-essentials the bargain between the Franceschini and the Comparini (lines 505-57). Equally excellent are his descriptions and his tone and manner; if we do not find in his diction the 'silvery and selectest phrase' which Browning promised[6], his tone and manner are not only admirably characteristic, they are well adapted to win him an attentive hearing from his audience.

The chief distinction of the Book, however, lies not in what it says, nor even, perhaps, in its way of saying it; it is rather to be found, if the metaphor of Mr. Henry James may be borrowed, in that 'perfect cloud of gold

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of Browning in Mr. T. H. Ward's *English Poets*, 'and many persons think they can do without Tertium Quid'. They should give it (and Bottini) another trial.

[1] IV. 316-17. [2] IV. 629-33. [3] IV. 1113-17.
[4] IV. 1212, 1580-82. [5] IV. 1444-5. [6] I. 933.

dust' which the poet stirs as he 'drags along a far sweeping train'[1]. He presents a picture of a particular society in a foreign country at a bygone time without any apparent effort or over-emphasis; he is no mere student or artist striving to recapture that society and its environment by painful research or imaginative strain; he lives and moves in it. The Book is full of lively detail. We watch the crowd at the puppet-play of Piazza Navona, the washer-women at work by the Citorio fountain; we stroll to the shop of the gossiping 'barberess' of Piazza Colonna, or by the help of the cord by the wall mount the stairs to the attic of the *vilissima lotrix*; we glance at the favourite negro page, at the unfaithful society-wife; we visit the mouldering palace where an Italian Caleb Balderstone, with napkin in half-wiped hand, points with pride to his needy master's priceless Raphael; or again we see, multiplied by the mirrors of the glorified saloon, the Principessa with her jewels, the powdered perukes of this Highness and that Excellency, the canes dependent from the ruffled wrist, the pomanders to make freckles fly, the testy cardinal, who, if you jostle his cards, will rap you out a . . st! But detail is not obtruded; it takes its proper ancillary place in the poet's picture of the very life of the Roman aristocracy of the seventeenth century—a picture which, with others painted in *The Ring and the Book*, is among the masterpieces of his 'matchless' Italian gallery, the most signal triumphs of their kind, perhaps, in English literature.

NOTES

7. *Out of the shade into the shine.*] See note on I. 1373.

10. *rabble's-brabble.*] For 'brabble' cf. More, *Utopia*, Book II. (§ Of the Religions of Utopia): 'brauling, quarelling, brabling, striffe'; *Twelfth Night*, 5. 1. 68, *Titus Andronicus*, 1. 2. 62, *Troilus and Cressida*, 5. 1. 99 ('he will spend his mouth . . . like Brabbler the hound').

[1] *Quarterly Review*, July 1912, p. 79. Comparing the Italian atmosphere of *The Ring and the Book* with that of *Romola*, in which books 'so many things make for identity' in this respect, Mr. James wrote: 'Each writer drags along a far-sweeping train, though indeed Browning's spreads so immeasurably farthest; but his stirs up, to my vision, a perfect cloud of gold-dust, while hers, in "Romola", by contrast, leaves the air about as clear, about as white, and withal about as cold, as before she had benevolently entered it'.

15-17. *Law's a machine, etc.*] The μηχανή ('machine') of the Attic theatre was a crane by which, when towards the end of a play ('at the play's fifth act') things had become so complicated that only supernatural agency could disentangle them, a god could be lowered, as it were from heaven, to 'clear things'. Horace insists that there should be no such intervention unless there is a knot that calls for it (*A.P.* 191); here the knot may call for the descent of 'Truth the divinity', but the speaker thinks Law an 'incompetent' μηχανή for introducing her.

23. *three years ago*], *i.e.* in the early summer of 1694, when Pietro, after his return from Arezzo to Rome, instituted his suit for the recovery of Pompilia's dowry.

26. *tort, retort*], *i.e.* offence and counter-offence, 'wrong returned by wrong' (548).

30. *cargo—or passengers?*] Either word would suit; the speaker prefers 'passengers' in order to justify his (not very apposite) quotation.

31-2.] Horace (*Sat.* I. 5. 12, 13) describes the hubbub incidental to his going on board a canal-barge. The servants of his party call out to the bargeman to put in at a convenient place, and when embarking protest against over-crowding.

> Ho! put in here! What! take three hundred in?
> You'll swamp us all.
>
> (Conington's translation.)

Browning puts the servants' cries in the wrong order.

35. *Fused and confused.*] Cf. II. 406, 'fusion and confusion'.

39.] For 'used' see note on II. 41.

42. *Eusebius and the established fact.*] Apparently Eusebius, who records, *inter alia*, the miracle alleged to have attended the conversion of Constantine, was officially regarded as a historian of unimpeachable accuracy; he was at any rate an indefatigable collector of materials. Gibbon (c. xvi.) calls him 'the gravest of the ecclesiastical historians'; 'his character', he says, 'was less tinctured by credulity than that of almost any of his contemporaries'.

47. *the Fisc and the other kind of Fisc*], *i.e.* the Advocate of the Fisc and the Procurator of the Fisc (for the distinction, see note on VIII. 276).

53. *We well know who, etc.*] Perhaps some one who pulls the Pope's strings rather than the Pope himself.

54. *the basset-table.*] Basset (from Italian *bassetta*) was a card-game played between a banker and punters. It is said to have been invented by a Venetian nobleman who was banished for the invention, and to have been introduced by the Venetian ambassador in 1674 to the French capital, where it was prohibited by edict (*Imperial Dictionary*); Dumas, however, speaks of the game as having been played in Paris much earlier.—Macaulay (*History*, c. x.)

mentions an English nobleman as 'keeping the bank at the Queen Dowager's basset table' in 1688.

55. *Her Eminence*] the Cardinal; Sua *Eminenza*, just as in French a king is Sa *Majesté*. Cf. 470 below, 'Her Efficacity my Cardinal . . . he', and 1632-3, 'Her Excellency . . . she'. Was this quite worth while?

65. *to aggrandize*], *i.e.* to exalt. 'The first thing to aggrandize a man in his own conceit, is to conceive of himself as neglected' (*Essays of Elia*, Eversley Edition, p. 374); cf. *Old Pictures in Florence*, xix.

68.] The speaker hints at a scandal concerning a married pair present.

81. *Will lie.*] 'Which', object to 'consuming' in 78, is understood as subject to 'will lie'.

87. *Like cresset, mudlarks poke, etc.*] A cresset is an iron vessel to hold grease or other burning substance; the street-urchins poke it to keep up the blaze.—In the first edition the passage ran:

> nor swung till lamp graze ground
> As watchman's cresset, he pokes here and there,
> Going his rounds, etc.

90-91.] The speaker's conception of Pietro as a 'good fat rosy careless man' (102), a lover of hospitality and good cheer, is drawn from a few words in the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxli., *E.L.* 145): 'he was too indulgent to his appetite and given up to laziness'.

97 *seqq.*] According to statements in the records Pietro was in financial straits both in 1680, the year of Pompilia's birth, and in 1693, that of her marriage; in 1680 they are said to have prompted the fraud about her parentage (Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 210, *E.L.* 261; cf. First Anonymous Pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* cxliii., *E.L.* 147), in 1693 to have made him anxious to see her well married (*O.Y.B.* cxli., *E.L.* 145). The speaker in Book IV. supposes the difficulties to have occurred only in 1680; he says that 'God's gift' of Pompilia steadied Pietro and cured his extravagant habits (cf. 287-98). But in II. 258 *seqq.* Half-Rome declares that it was when Pompilia came into his life that Pietro became careless about money—'learnt to dandle and forgot to dig'.

111. *our "poor dear shame-faced ones".*] From the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*loc. cit.* in last note): Pietro 'was several times imprisoned for debt and, on making a statement of his property, received secret alms from the Apostolic Palace every month'. If this happened at all, it probably happened, as the pamphlet implies, in 1680 and not in 1693, for Pietro's will, said to have been made in 1695, shows that he was then comfortably off (*O.Y.B.* clvi., clxxxvi., *E.L.* 161, 191; Treves, p. 9).

There were large endowments throughout Italy for the relief

of *poveri vergognosi*, 'shame-faced' poor (*i.e.* people, perhaps of good birth, who had seen better days); an account of such an endowment at Florence is given in *Romola*, c. v. *Poveri vergognosi* are now relieved by the *Congregazioni di Carità* of the Italian communes (King and Okey, *Italy To-Day*, pp. 223-4).

114. *ravens they, And providence he.*] Psalm cxlvii. 9, 'He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry' (cf. Job xxxviii. 41).

147. *to vespers, missal beneath arm.*] As Berdoe points out, Violante would not take her missal (mass-book) to vespers.

148. *the proper San Lorenzo*] as being her parish church. Cf. VII. 17, 'the proper church'; VIII. 364.

170. *by Citorio.*] The Piazza di Monte Citorio, west of the Corso beyond the Piazza Colonna.

172. *shine.*] Browningese for 'show'.—The woman is described as a *vilissima lotrix* (*O. Y. B.* ix.); *lotrix* is mistranslated in *E.L.*

184. *three pauls.*] A paul was worth about 5d. See note on I. 324.

187. *that person whom you trust.*] The incidents of the bargain were invented by Browning, but in the post-Browning pamphlet there is something about this go-between and her 'sagacity' (*O. Y. B.* 219, *E.L.* 272-3).

196. "*My reproof is taken away*".] No wonder that 'the officiating priest turned round' if Violante introduced these words into the *Magnificat*! They are suggested by the words *of Elisabeth* in Luke i. 25: 'Thus hath the Lord dealt with me . . . to take away my reproach among men'.

203. *pair of pinners and a coif.*] The word 'pinners' is applied either to 'a coif with two large flaps, worn by women in the 17th and 18th centuries', or to the flaps themselves (*N.E.D.*), as here.

206. *the Orvieto in a double dose.*] Orvieto is 'the lightest and most delicate of Roman wines' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 323); but when produced by Arcangeli on a fête-day it is expected to 'fuddle the old nose' of his father-in-law (VIII. 36).

213. *and the rest O' the names.*] See VII. 5-7; *O. Y. B.* clv., *E.L.* 159.

214. *next day.*] The date of Pompilia's birth was said to be July 17, that of her baptism was July 23 (*O. Y. B. loc. cit.*). The speaker's 'next day' fits the Roman custom of fifty years since; 'the ceremony of baptism', says Story (*Roba di Roma*, p. 486), 'is usually performed within forty-eight hours' of birth.

217. *civility and the mode.*] See note on II. 1473.

232. *I thought as much*], *i.e.* you assent, as I expected.

235], *i.e.* before it is encroached on, etc.

242-55.] Compare Violante's justification of her act in III. 184-219.

242. *silly-sooth.*] See note on III. 806.

268. *Don't cheat me, don't cheat you, etc.*] 'I admit', says the speaker, 'that you shouldn't cheat your friends'; he points to himself and 'Her Highness', calling them 'me' and 'you' as he addresses 'Her Excellency'.

279.] An improvement on the 'God don't please, nor his heart shall pine' of the first edition.

287-98.] See note on 97 *seqq.*

310.] Cf. IX. 514, 'some pearl secreted by a sickly fish'.

328-9.] Cf. the beginning of *Solomon and Balkis.*—We learn from 1 Kings x. 18-20 that Solomon made 'a great throne of ivory' which had six steps, and that 'twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps'; and from 1 Kings vii. 7 that 'he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment'. Josephus (*Ant.* 8. 5. 2) says that the ivory throne as described was 'constructed as a seat of justice'.—Browning's vase between the lions seems to have been his own invention.

335. *To go.*] Originally 'should go'; Browning when revising his text limited the frequency of omissions of the relative pronoun.

338. "*Nunc dimittis*"]. In his first edition Browning printed "*Nunc dimittas*", which one sometimes feels (wrongly) that Symeon should have said, and which the Comparini meant.

341. *should*] is better than the 'to' of the first edition.

352-3.] For 'poor souls, It proved to be' Browning originally perpetrated 'fate must needs It proved to be'.

354.] For 'truth' and 'sham' the first edition has 'The truth' and 'the sham', which make the line six-footed.

360 *seqq.*] Developed from the evidence of a servant of the Franceschini (*O.Y.B.* li., lii., *E.L.* 52). See note on V. 71.

381 *seqq.*] There is some vagueness here in respect of the time referred to. The 'sisters', according to the speaker, were off Guido's hands, though their marriage brought no help to the Franceschini finances; Paolo was provided for. There remained the mother, who was likely to live long, and Girolamo, who, however, had gained preferment. There were not therefore, at the time apparently meant, so very 'many noble mouths to feed'.

It is stated in Treves (p. 11), on the authority, no doubt, of the Arezzo registers, that Guido had only one sister, Porzia, who 'married a member of the distinguished family of the Aldobrandini' (for this Porzia see XII. 785); and the records speak of one sister only, who had married a brother of Conti (Pompilia's deposition, *O.Y.B.* lxxxiii., *E.L.* 91).

391. *a second son.*] A mistake; see note on II. 291.

392. *these thirty years.*] Based on the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxlviii., *E.L.* 151). As Professor Hodell points out (*O.Y.B.* 298), Browning makes a wrong use of this passage in II. 304, where

it is said that Guido (not Paolo) had been thirty years in Rome; cf. V. 291-2.

400-405.] See note on I. 261-5.

407. *Though still from the side o' the Church.*] See note on III. 282.

409. *forty-six years.*] Cf. 719 below, XII. 194; and see note on II. 291.

411. *he too having his Cardinal.*] See note on III. 407.

422-3.] Compare what Guido says about this in V. 292 *seqq.*

437. Notum tonsoribus!] From Horace, *Sat.* I. 7. 3; used already in II. 115 (where see note), but with more point here.

440. *the woman-dealer in perukes.*] Second Anonymous Pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* cxviii., *E.L.* 210: Guido's 'most usual place of resort was the shop of certain *Donne Perucchiere*, where he had often made it known that it was his intention to start housekeeping with some good dowry'; Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 209, *E.L.* 259: 'he revealed his desire [to take a wife with a good dowry] to a certain *perucchiera* near the Piazza Colonna'.

448. *zecchines.*] A zecchine was worth about ten shillings; see note on I. 324.

456. *hair black as yon patch.*] Cf. III. 66-7, where the painter Carlo Maratta is represented as fascinated by Pompilia's loveliness:—

> Then, oh that pair of eyes, that pendent hair,
> Black this and black the other!

See also II. 275, XI. 1349, 1367.[1]—Professor Phelps collects passages to show that Browning's 'ideally beautiful women generally have yellow hair' (*Browning: How to know him*, p. 142); he might have added Sordello's Palma to his list of yellow-haired beauties.

456-7. *eyes as big As yon pomander.*] Pomanders were (1) wax perfume balls, such as Autolycus mentions among the 'trumpery' which he sells at the shearers' feast (*Winter's Tale*, 4. 4. 608); (2) certain aromatic substances used against infection; were they also warranted 'to make freckles fly'? and (3) boxes of gold or silver in which to carry them. See *Shakespeare's England*, ii. pp. 115-16.

At a time of pestilence, shortly before the date with which we

[1] Sir F. Treves writes (*The Country of 'The Ring and the Book'*, pp. 237-8): 'I have wandered through every picture gallery in Rome and in Florence, seeking, among the crowds of faces of Italian women of years gone by, for the face of Pompilia. After scanning some hundreds of faces . . . I at last found Pompilia. She appears in Fra Filippo Lippi's picture of the Madonna in the Pitti Palace at Florence'. Sir Frederick proceeds to justify his identification, to which he attaches so much importance that he gives a reproduction of the famous picture in colour as the frontispiece to his book. His remarks on the expression of the face are most interesting, but to any close identification of the Madonna with *Browning's* Pompilia it may be objected *in limine* (1) that, while the former is, as Sir Frederick says, 'a little woman assuredly', the latter was tall (see *e.g.* VI. 399); (2) that, while the Madonna is fair-haired, Pompilia's hair was 'black as yon patch'.

are concerned, Mr. Shorthouse's hero is represented as carrying about with him at Rome 'a pomander of silver in the shape of an apple, stuffed with spices, which sent out a curious faint perfume through small holes' (*John Inglesant*, c. xxxiii.).

470. *Her Efficacity.*] See the notes on 55 above (for 'Her') and III. 1471 (for 'efficacity').

472. *the grey mare.*] 'The people's word' here quoted seems to be, not of Italian, as is suggested, but of English origin. The *N.E.D.* traces it back to 1546. Macaulay (*History*, c. iii.) suspects that 'the vulgar proverb originated in the preference generally given to the grey mares of Flanders over the finest coach horses of England'.

484. *its mere mention.*] Substituted for the original 'mention of it'.

490-93.] See III. 396 *seqq.*, note.

495. *tear.*] An improvement on the 'one' of the first edition.

497. *stole to church at eve, etc.*] All this is a mistake; see note on II. 70.

499-501.] According to Pompilia (VII. 482-583) it was not so easy to gain Pietro's acquiescence in the *fait accompli*.

503. *once more.*] See above, 465-6.

506. *clapnet.*] A net which can be suddenly shut by pulling a string; *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*, line 403 (*N.E.D.*).

514.] Compare the similar language of Guido in V. 497-502.

527-47.] See note on V. 494.

528. *inexpressive.*] Passive: 'that is not expressed'. Shakespeare (*As you like it*, 3. 2. 10) and Milton (*Nativity Ode*, 116, and *Lycidas*, 176) have 'unexpressive' in the sense 'that cannot be expressed'. See note on 'insuppressive', XI. 980.

547. *No party blamed.*] More correctly, 'neither party had blamed'.

—. *starting fair.*] For the ungrammatical participle see note on II. 229.

554. *least*] should be 'less', as 'no' in 547 should be 'neither'.

568. *fain were they*], *i.e.* 'that they were fain'.

—. *long before five months had passed.*] The Comparini were at Arezzo from early in December 1693 to early in April 1694; see Appendix III.

569-70.] See note on II. 520.

574. *this worse than bad.*] See 564 above.

577. *fell.*] Substituted for the original 'came', which word has occurred in 573.

600. *round us in the ears.*] A very favourite phrase of Browning's, used again in VIII. 1321, 1719, X. 1589, XI. 675, 1222, also in *Luria* (Act II.) and *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*. In all these places 'to round a person in the ears' means 'to din a thing into his ears', to tell him something repeatedly and plainly. But the

old verb 'to rown' (corrupted into 'round') means 'to whisper', and 'to round a person in the ears' is properly to whisper something to him; 'in later use', says the *N.E.D.*, 'to take him *privately* to task'. The *N.E.D.*, which, strangely enough, gives IV. 600 as an instance of the meaning 'to whisper', quotes Coverdale's version of Job xxxiii. 15: 'In dreames and visions of the night season . . . He rowneth them in the eares': cf. *King John*, 2. 1. 566. In *Old Mortality* (c. iv.) Niel Blane tells his daughter to accost a person quietly, to 'gie him a pu' by the sleeve, and round [a confidential message] into his lug'; Charles Lamb revives the half-forgotten phrase in his *Essays*, of course in its right sense.

Browning's misuse of the expression was perhaps suggested by the use of 'round' and 'roundly' in the sense of 'straightforward' and 'straightforwardly', 'without hesitation or reserve', in such passages as *Hamlet*, 2. 2. 139, 3. 1. 191, *Richard II.* 2. 1. 122; cf. V. 1354, 'to be round with you', *i.e.* 'to tell you the plain truth plainly'.

612. *bye-blow*], *i.e.* an illegitimate child, because 'it comes into the world by a side-stroke' (*N.E.D.*); cf. V. 770 'by-blow bastard babe', and the passage quoted from Fielding in the note on 1498 below. The word will be found in the torrent of vernacular abuse with which Squire Beltham in *Harry Richmond* drenches his son-in-law.

616.] The 'counter-thrust' appears to be that, if he proves Violante's 'odious tale' to have been a 'lie hatched for mere malice' sake', he must either leave it unpunished or try revenge.

634. *fight their prize upon.*] See note on XI. 476.

642. *write, print, publish, etc.*] See note on II. 658.

645. *to jeer*], replaces the original 'around'.

658. *superfluity of naughtiness.*] James i. 21.

661. *make parade of spoil they filched.*] The 'spoil' is the aristocratic connection which they had avowedly secured by a falsehood.

662. *from the height of a tower.*] They could slander Guido from a place of vantage, being safe at Rome and not exposed to his vengeance.

668.] The 'four months' should be seven or eight. We are now in April or May 1694; Pompilia was married on September 6, 1693. See Appendix III.

671. *had come.*] In the first edition 'was come'; the 'was' is ugly after the 'was' at the beginning of the line.

708-11.] We have had this 'angler-simile' applied to Pompilia already in II. 270-77, 321-3, 1355-60.

717-19.] The description of Guido's appearance and the incorrect statement about his age (see note on II. 291) are taken from the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 266). A rough pen-sketch of Guido, 'made on a loose sheet shortly before his execution', was 'bought among a bundle of miscellaneous papers in London, and

sent by the finder to the poet' (*O.Y.B.* (7)); it is reproduced in *O.Y.B.* (facing p. 274) and in this commentary (frontispiece).

720-22.] 'She' and 'He' should be 'Her' and 'Him'.

723. *less*] should be 'more'.

731. *devil's dung.*] The foul-smelling drug asafœtida (*teufelsdreck*).—When a lodger, having a curmudgeon of a landlord, wished to end his tenancy before his term had expired, Dr. Johnson advised him thus: 'You may say that you want to make some experiments in natural philosophy, and may burn a large quantity of assafœtida in his house'.

757. *the subtle air that breeds the subtle wit.*] See the words attributed by George Vasari to Michel Angelo, quoted in the note on XII. 811.

762. *try cross-buttock or whirl quarter-staff.*] For 'cross-buttock' see *The Two Poets of Croisic*, CVII., where Browning tells how on a certain occasion 'Humbug cross-buttocked' Voltaire. In *Tom Jones* (Book XIII. c. v.) Fielding quotes a contemporary advertisement in which a Professor of Boxing announces the opening of an academy 'where the whole theory and practice of that truly British art, with all the various stops, blows, cross-buttocks, etc. incident to combatants, will be fully taught and explained'.—A quarter-staff is 'a stout pole from six to eight feet long, tipped with iron; formerly used as a weapon by the English peasantry'. A passage quoted by the *N.E.D.* from a writer of 1589 suggests that the staff was made from an ash-tree cleft in four.

770. *the famous letter.*] See Appendix IV.

796.] A relative clause to which 'piece of heaven' is the antecedent; cf. 842-6.

799. *the Commissary*], *i.e.* the 'Governor' of Arezzo, as Browning usually calls him; in the Latin of the *O.Y.B.* he is *Gubernator* or *Commissarius*, in the Italian *Governatore* or *Commissario*.

807-41.] See note on III. 1015 *seqq.*

824.] The rhythm of the line is improved by the omission of 'her', which stood before 'heart' in the first edition.

834. *poor Uzzah that I am!*] 2 Samuel vi. 6, 7. When in X. 1482-3 Browning made his friar of mean degree ask the question,

> Who was it dared lay hand upon the ark
> His betters saw fall nor put finger forth?

he would himself have given a wrong answer; for he originally wrote 'Hophni', not 'Uzzah', in the present passage.—The friar is not compared to Uzzah (or to Hophni) in the Yellow Book.

836.] Luke xxi. 19.

840. *Said* Ave *for her intention*] 'for her sake', cf. XII. 179. A Gallicism; *faire des prières, donner des aumônes, dire la messe, etc. à l'intention de quelqu'un=faire ces choses dans le dessein qu'elles lui servent devant Dieu* (Littré). Newman wrote to Manning on a

piquant occasion : 'I propose to say seven masses for your intention amid the difficulties and anxieties of your ecclesiastical duties'.

843. *all but one streak.*] Cf. 796 above.

853. *Was hardly fallen.*] Eve had still enough of 'paradisal nature' to refrain from making, as Pompilia made, a false accusation against her husband. In the first and second editions of the poem line 856 ('So much —Eve's') stands before line 854, and the punctuation is defective. The change is a decided improvement.

864. *there needed Ætna vomit flame.*] Cf. IX. 464, 'she needed write'.

876.] Negro pages were fashionable at the time; readers of *Esmond* will remember that Lady Castlewood had one.

887. *Lucretia and Susanna.*] Models of purity; Lucretia the wife of Collatinus (IX. 178) and the Susanna of the Apocrypha.

888-9.] Leda surprised by Jupiter is the subject of a famous Correggio now in the Berlin Gallery; another nude Leda by the same artist, of which, according to Vasari (*Lives of the Painters*, ii. p. 407), Giulio Romano said 'that he had never beheld colouring executed with equal perfection', has now been destroyed.

912-15.] See Pompilia's deposition, *O.Y.B.* lxxxiii.-iv., *E.L.* 91, 92.

926. *'Tis impudently pleaded.*] See III. 972-89. The Pope admits the plea (X. 967-72). Pompilia says in her deposition that her application to the bishop was fruitless 'because of his relations with my husband's house' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92).

930-52.] A long sentence, but its construction is simple.

935-8.] See note on II. 796-7.

944.] With this casual reference to the theatre-incident compare that in II. 801. The incident is mentioned only once in the records; Pompilia speaks of it in her deposition as trivial in itself, but as increasing Guido's suspicions of Caponsacchi (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiii., *E.L.* 91). In the poem it becomes the turning-point in Caponsacchi's life, redeeming him from the frivolity which bade fair to wreck him; and it is hardly less important to Pompilia. The sight at the theatre of the 'beautiful sad strange smile' of Pompilia, and that of the 'earnest . . . silent, grave, almost solemn face' of Caponsacchi, were for Browning the beginning of his romance.

945. *she that could not write!*] See Appendix IV.

946.] In apposition to 'letters'.

950-52.] Could not a priest have had the wit to contrive an ordinary amour, easily hushed up, instead of this infamy in the light of day? Browning originally wrote 'no mitigable amour to be hushed up'.

956-7.] The reading of the later editions, with its strange punctuation, has been substituted for

> Do you find it registered the part of a priest
> That to right wrongs he skip from the church door. . . .

960. *In a lay-dress.*] See note on II. 999.—The insertion of 'kind' before 'sentinel' in this line greatly improves the rhythm.

963-5.] The suggestion is made by Guido's advocate Arcangeli (*O.Y.B.* cviii., *E.L.* 117), and Bottini shows why it could not be adopted (*O.Y.B.* clxxiv.-v., *E.L.* 181). See IX. 1127 and note.

968. *received protestations of her love.*] This is *not* part of Caponsacchi's 'own account o' the case' as given in his deposition; on the contrary, he expressly denies that he received such protestations (*O.Y.B.* lxxxviii.-xc., *E.L.* 96-8). See Appendix V.

975-7.] See Caponsacchi's deposition (*loc. cit.*).

979. *he had seen her once*] viz. at the theatre (above, 944).

1006. *by instinct.*] But the speaker has just said that Caponsacchi had 'heard everywhere report' which confirmed what Pompilia told him (981).

1012. *argument and inference.*] The 'argument' is that contained in 966-1007, the critical analysis of Caponsacchi's claim that his motive was 'pity of innocence'; the 'inference' is that, this claim being exploded, the true explanation of his conduct was that he acted in 'the old stale unromantic way of fault' (1017-24).

1028. *visits night by night.*] It appears from the records that the only evidence for such visits came from the 'officious go-between'.

1029. *far and away.*] Cf. *Fifine at the Fair*, v., 'the home far and away'. 'Far and away' in ordinary English 'very much' with comparatives and superlatives; do other writers use it as Browning does here?

1033-42.] See Appendix IV.

1053. *I burnt because I read.*] Caponsacchi is misrepresented here. The letters which he said that he burnt were not the alleged love-letters—these he denies having received at all, but other letters in which Pompilia begged for his escort in her flight to the Comparini at Rome.

1054. Cui profuerint!] *i.e.* the forger and finder was Guido, the person who stood to gain by their being found. It was a maxim—a very obvious truism—laid down by a certain Cassius that in a murder-trial the judges should ask themselves the question, *Cui bono fuerit?* (=*cui profuerit?*), 'Who stood to gain by the crime?'

1069. *The silent* acquetta.] Cf. V. 1736-7, where Guido puts the question:

> Why noise,
> When there's the *acquetta* and the silent way?

Acquetta occurs often in the records, *e.g.* in *O.Y.B.* ccxiii., *E.L.* 215 (Second Anonymous Pamphlet), where it is said that Pompilia was aware that Guido had made *preparatione d' acquetta* with which he meant to poison her. The word, which in common parlance means a light shower, is used euphemistically of *aqua tofana*, a deadly

liquid once employed freely by poisoners in Italy; it is sometimes called *acquetta di Perugia—cette fameuse aqua-tofana, dont quelques personnes conservaient encore* (at the beginning of the nineteenth century) *le secret à Pérouse*, which plays a part in Dumas's *Monte Cristo* (iii. pp. 221, 229).

1104-6.] See note on III. 1546-69.

1120-21. *Caused to be . . . sent to Rome.*] See note on II. 1018.

1140-45.] Cf. II. 1497-1503.

1144. *the Paphos fit for such.*] The name has suffered degradation. At Paphos in Cyprus Venus had a magnificent temple, noticed *e.g.* in Homer (*Od.* 8. 363) and in Virgil (*Æn.* 1. 415-17).

1147. *the stock-fish*], *i.e.* he is stolidly apathetic; see *Measure for Measure*, 3. 2. 116. Stock-fish is dried-cod ('so called from its hardness'—Dr. Johnson), beaten before it is cooked. In *The Tempest*, 3. 2. 79, 'I'll make a stock-fish of thee' means 'I will beat thee'. In *1 Henry IV.* 2. 4. 271, when the Prince calls Falstaff a 'huge hill of flesh', Falstaff retorts that the Prince is a 'starveling', an 'eel's skin', a 'dried neat's tongue', a 'stock-fish'.

1158. *tickle to the touch*], *i.e.* a ticklish thing to touch. For this obsolete use of 'tickle' as adjective see *2 Henry VI.* 1. 1. 216:

> Paris is lost; the state of Normandy
> Stands on a tickle point.

In *Hamlet* (2. 2. 337) a clown is said 'to make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere' ['sere'=the catch in a gunlock which is released by the trigger], *i.e.* who are easily moved to laughter.

1187. *To try conclusions.*] See note on V. 1125.

1197. A particularly ugly line—

> Anóther | consíd | erá | tion háve it | your wáy.

1209.] Matthew xxv. 21; used with covert sarcasm again in I. 1190.

1218-79.] The decision of the Court in the Process of Flight is developed at great length, with much irony, by both Half-Rome and The Other Half-Rome (II. 1177 *seqq.*, III. 1376 *seqq.*); it is sneered at, though claimed as a decision in his favour, by Guido (V. 1177-1239, 1855-65, 1884-1938); it is denounced most vehemently by Caponsacchi (VI. 1781-6). The gentle Pompilia, however, recognized that (so far at least as she was concerned) 'the judges judged aright i' the main'—they gave her 'a truce from torture and Arezzo' (VII. 1649-51); and the Pope, to the reader's surprise perhaps, considered that the Court did not 'do amiss i' the main' to any of the parties (X. 705 *seqq.*).

1220. *As end*], *i.e.* 'as to end'; cf. VI. 188:

> I had picked up so much of knaves'-policy
> As hide it;

and VIII. 1774:

> the ambitious do so harden heart
> As lightly hold by these home-sanctitudes.

1236-7], *i.e.* whether the subject of their prattle is edifying or not. Donna Olimpia Pamfili was sister-in-law to Pope Innocent X. (1644–55), whom she ruled and robbed; he could deny her nothing, and is said to have made her a present of the Palazzo Doria-Pamfili, the most magnificent of Roman palaces. And yet when he died she grudged him even the cost of a coffin.—Her influence with the Pope led to the circulation of scandalous stories about her; Pasquin (see note on XII. 141) called her *Olim pia, nunc impia*, and said of Innocent, *Magis amat Olympiam quam Olympium.*

The Saint Rose here mentioned may be either the Franciscan saint of Viterbo (died 1261) or the Dominican saint of Lima in Peru (died 1617, canonized *c.* 1675). Though the latter St. Rose interested Spaniards rather than Italians, I think that she is meant. Donna Olimpia was a recent sinner, and if girls preferred to prattle about a saint they would perhaps select one recently canonized.

1240. *as here we mean.*] The wife, the priest, the husband, have made a noise and, though they may be innocent otherwise, should be punished for making it, just as school-girls are punished for prattling, however innocently, in their dormitories.

1242. *After her run.*] She has 'scoured the fields' (above, 1228).

1255. *He fails obtain.*] Cf. VI. 684, 'love has failed allure'; IX. 1240, 'ye fail preoccupy'; X. 1828, 'How could saints and martyrs fail see truth?'

1267. *a further help i' the case*], *i.e.* to Guido, to whom Caponsacchi's relegation must be some satisfaction.

1272. *heading, hanging.*] Cf. I. 126, 350.

1276.] Luke xvi. 8.

1279. *to the steel point*], *i.e.* to the logical extremity; cf. 1566 below, where 'cold steel' is logical argument in the law-courts and is contrasted with violence ('explosives').

1282-3.] The Piazza Navona is the largest of Roman piazzas. 'The principal fruit and vegetable market of Rome is held here every Wednesday and Saturday and on these occasions it presents a most animated scene'; a suitable place for a 'Punch-and-his-mate' show.

Story (*Roba di Roma*, pp. 267 *seqq.*) describes the shows of puppets at the Teatro Emiliano in the Piazza, but it is the ordinary Punch show in the open air that is here described.

1286. *perdue.*] See note on III. 1233.

1300. *a general duck-down.*] Above, 1286.

1303-5.] Guido 'had resigned his part to brother Abate' long before the time here referred to; see note on II. 727-8.

1305-27.] Browning here follows the Second Anonymous

Pamphlet, in which the three suits are fully described and it is asserted that the murders were caused by the hatred against the Comparini which these suits had roused in Guido's mind (*O.Y.B.* ccviii., *E.L.* 210).

1308-16.] See the note on II. 735-44, where the 'notable decree' made on the first hearing of this first civil suit is summarized. The note also shows that Browning's references here to Tomati and Molines are incorrect; the first hearing was before Tomati (whom the records describe as 'A.C.', which Hodell explains as *Auditor Curiae*), the appeal was to Molines. It seems that the poet was also wrong in saying, as he does repeatedly, that Tomati presided at the murder-trial; the records make no mention of him in connection with it, the presiding judge was Venturini (IV. 1327).

1331-7.] See note on III. 1471-7.

1344. *the abominable thing*], *i.e.* the total loss of honour consequent on his being proved to be the husband of an adulteress.

1360. *Vittiano.*] See note on II. 816.

1364. *font*], *i.e.* fount, as often in old writers; cf. 1358.

1365. *The lodge.*] Guido and his confederates were at Paolo's villa near the Ponte Molle from December 24 to January 2 (*O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 263).—For Paolo's departure from Rome see note on III. 1540-41.

1369-70.] See Appendix II.

1371. *'Tis one i' the evening.*] *Hora prima noctis* (*O.Y.B.* lxi.); *un' hora circa di notte* (see *O.Y.B.* 320); *i.e.* an hour after the Ave Maria, say about 7 P.M. See note on XII. 130-31.

1377-9.] See note on III. 1623-4.

1383.] The insertion of 'the' (absent from the first edition) before 'lightnings' greatly improves the rhythm.

1385-90.] Amplified from *O.Y.B.* ccxxiv. (*E.L.* 225): *prendendola per le treccie, & alzandola da terra oue giaceua*, and *O.Y.B.* lix. (*E.L.* 60): *haueua la testa sù le gambe del Sig. Pietro Comparini già morto.*

1394. *To the mill and the grange, etc.*] See Appendix II. All that Browning learnt about the matter from the records was that 'when the uproar of this horrible slaughter was heard abroad, people ran thither, but the criminals succeeded in escaping' (*O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263). The post-Browning pamphlet (according to Hall Griffin's translation, *Life*, p. 319; see *O.Y.B.* 222, *E.L.* 277) says that Pompilia, 'collecting her dying breath, had still sufficient strength of voice to make her neighbours hear her cries for help'.

1396. *had the start.*] They left the villa at Ponte Molle, to which they had hurriedly returned after the murders, 'about an hour' before the Public Force arrived there. Browning borrows 'Public Force' from the *La Forza* of the records (Hodell, *O.Y.B.* 312).

1398. *near Baccano.*] See note on III. 1634.

1405-10.] From the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 264: 'Patrizi . . . having been overheated and wounded with a slight scratch (*puntura*) died in a few days'.

1412-14.] The Cardinal was a person of impatient temper (line 56) and was listening 'o'er the cards' to the speaker (1485).

1416-21.] Cf. XI. 1704. 'It is told that Franceschini, during the course of the journey [back to Rome after his arrest], asked one of the *sbirri* how in the world the crime had been discovered. And when he was answered that his wife, whom they had found still living, had revealed it, he was so astounded that he was almost deprived of his senses'. Before leaving the scene of the murders Guido had been assured by one of his confederates that Pompilia was dead. *O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263-4 (Secondary Source).

1422.] 'The criminals were tied on to their horses and taken to Rome' (*O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 264).

1425-30.] Amplified from *O.Y.B.* See note on III. 8-10, with which passage these lines may be compared and contrasted.

1436. *flung for dead On Pietro's lap.*] See note on 1385-90 above.

1442-75.] In her death-bed confessions Pompilia absolutely denied that she had been unfaithful to her husband (*O.Y.B.* lviii., *E.L.* 59). The lawyers for the prosecution contended that death-bed confessions are true in fact and are accepted as true in the courts, and they quoted authorities to that effect (*O.Y.B.* lxvii., lxxvi., clxv.-vi., *E.L.* 71, 83, 173-4). Guido's lawyers, also backed by authorities, took exception to these general statements, and argued, as 'Guido's friends' are represented as arguing here, that in the particular case of Pompilia there were strong motives for making a false confession (*O.Y.B.* cxii., cxxx., ccxxviii., *E.L.* 121, 137, 231).

1453. *the old Religious.*] Fra Celestino (*O.Y.B.* lviii., *E.L.* 58).

1466-7.] The records give no support to this statement; see Introduction to Book VI. Browning makes Caponsacchi appear before the Court, but as *amicus curiae* ('friend of the Court', VI. 1636) rather than as one who had to 'answer for the part he played'.

1479-83.] This point is not made in the pleadings of Guido's lawyers; Browning found it in the pro-Guido First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cliii., *E.L.* 156). It was of course one for Guido's lawyers to make, if it was worth making at all; but the poet in his admirable caricature makes the anti-Guido advocate Bottini show his ingenuity by employing a casuistical argument which it suggested (IX. 1495-1503).

In Book IV. Guido's friends contend that Pompilia first made a false public confession denying misconduct, and afterwards a true private one admitting it. By the latter—so they say—she gained absolution both for the misconduct and for the denial.

In Book IX. Bottini professes to think that she first made a true private confession admitting misconduct and thereby gained

absolution for it; that her misconduct was thus obliterated; that she was therefore justified in declaring publicly afterwards that there had been no misconduct.

1487. *Deaf folks accuse the dumb!*] People are deaf to Guido's defence, and say that he offers none. The next line suggests that he does in fact offer a kind of defence, but offers it very lamely.

1497. *a furlong*]. *i.e.* the few miles into Tuscany, to reach which was 'the easy task Of hours told on the fingers of one hand' (X. 830-32).

1498. *anotherguess tribunal.*] 'Anotherguess' is 'a phonetic corruption from "anothergets" for "anothergates"', which is a genitive, meaning 'of another gate' (*i.e.* fashion, manner). So *N.E.D.*, which quotes 'anothergates' from a writer of 1594, and 'anothergets' from one of 1625 ('I wish you anothergets wife then Socrates had'). For 'anotherguess' cf. Fielding, *Tom Jones*, Book VII. c. iv.: 'If I thought he was a gentleman's son, thof he was a bye-blow [*i.e.* a bastard; see above, 612], I should behave to him in another-guess manner'; also Borrow, *Larengro* (published in 1851), c. xvi.: 'I fell in with other guess companions from whom I received widely different impressions'. In *Twelfth Night* (5. 1. 198) we have 'othergates', which, says W. A. Wright, survives as a north-country provincialism; he adds that 'other guess' (in the same sense) is used in Somersetshire. In the passage quoted from *Tom Jones* above the speaker is a Somersetshire landlady.

The sentence of 'anotherguess tribunal' is to be found in *O.Y.B.* v.-viii., *E.L.* 5-7. See the Pope's condemnation of it in X. 834-6.

1512. *absence of the guilty.*] The Commissary of Arezzo 'was of opinion' to condemn Pompilia to imprisonment in the Stinche (see next note) for life, but the Court at Florence 'suspended the execution' of the sentence on the ground that she was already in confinement at Rome (*era rinserrata a Roma in un Luogo Pio*).

1516. *The Stinche.*] Prison in the Via Ghibellina at Florence; now part of a theatre. The name was taken from a castle of the Cavalcanti, the prisoners in which, on its capture by the 'Blacks' in 1304, were transferred to this prison (Gardner's *Florence*, p. 226).

1528-40.] This argument, which is used again in VIII. 999-1003, is taken from *O.Y.B.* xv., *E.L.* 16-17 (Arcangeli): 'When we are concerned with an offence which hurts honour this is not momentary but continuous (*habet tractum successivum*); nay more, it becomes greater by lapse of time in proportion to the increase of the insult to the injured party'.

1541. *get to explode.*] Browning often uses 'to get' in this colloquial way; cf. VI. 763, 'it has got to be somehow for my sake too'; VI. 862, 'the dream gets to involve yourself'; V. 201, 'got to be a priest'; *The Inn Album*, p. 78, 'How selfish get you happy folks to be!'; VII. 65, 110, 118, 332. Note also its use for

'to become' in X. 1794, 'we have got too familiar with the light'; XI. 893; VII. 342, 640, 1200 ('It had got half through April').

1545 *seqq.*] This argument comes from the Second Anonymous Pamphlet, where it is stated very effectively (*O.Y.B.* ccxviii.-ix., *E.L.* 220).

1556. *cold steel*], *i.e.* wit, common sense, and logic, which he had plied doughtily (1550-51).

1557.] Browning wrote originally 'hire . . . plot, plan, execute!'

1577-8. fons et origo Malorum.] What is the *fons* of this famous phrase?—For the scansion of 1577 see note on VI. 1691. In the first edition line 1578 ran—

Malorum—increasingly drunk,—which justice done,—

which expresses the poet's meaning very harshly, obscurely and unrhythmically.

1597. *his folly*], *i.e.* his foolish ill-treatment of them at Arezzo.

1599.] Originally 'Would otherwise be'; here, as often, Browning inserted a relative pronoun on revision.

1605.] *His mother loves him.*] So Pompilia: 'I could not love him, but his mother did' (VII. 1732).

1609-10.] This is doubtful; see note on III. 407, and contrast 414 above.

1610-11.] See note on III. 481.

1621-31.] For the questions here raised about the infliction of the torture on Guido see Appendix VI.

1633. *she.*] See note on 55 above.

BOOK V.—COUNT GUIDO FRANCESCHINI

INTRODUCTION

The speech here given is represented as having been made to the judges, 'in a small chamber that adjoins the court'[1], a few days after the murders at the villa—on what precise day we cannot determine, for the statements in the poem are conflicting. The Comparini were murdered on January 2, and we are told in V. 1683 that Guido spoke four days later, viz. on the 6th; but it appears from VI. 37 that Caponsacchi spoke on the 5th[2], and from I. 1050 that Guido spoke the day before. Again in V. 936 Guido alludes to Pompilia, who died on the night of January 6, as dead, and in line 978 he speaks of her body as already exposed in San Lorenzo church, but in line 1687 he declares that she is still alive,

> Has breath enough to tell her story yet.

The precise date of the speech, however, is unimportant; I notice Browning's ambiguities on the point as an instance of a fact which will force itself often on the student's notice, that though Browning took, as he declared, great pains about his dates, he was, as his son admitted, 'not at his best' in such matters[3].—Another time inaccuracy, due, I think, to a misreading of the records, may be noticed in Book V. The poet brings his Guido into the witness-chamber exhausted by 'his limbs' late taste of what

[1] I. 950.
[2] Caponsacchi says that Pompilia was 'butchered' by Guido 'three days' before he appeared before the judges.
[3] See Mr. R. Barrett Browning's letter to Professor Hodell in *O.Y.B.* 337 (note 536).

was called the Cord'[1], but, as will be shown in Appendix VI., if the criminal was subjected to that cruel torture at all, this happened at a much later stage.

The chief interest of Book V. lies in the contrast which it presents to Book XI. Some critics have supposed that Browning hinted at this contrast, which his preliminary summary describes most forcibly[2], in the headings which he gave to the two Books[3]; be that as it may, it *saute aux yeux*. In Book XI. Guido stands stripped, not merely of title and family name, but of the artifice and subterfuge in which he wraps himself in Book V.; 'the true words shine last'. For a full understanding of the poet's conception both monologues are essential; but I shall speak of the clothed as of the naked scoundrel in the Introduction to the later monologue.

'Browning', writes Professor Phelps, 'is the greatest master of special pleading in all literature. Although he detested Count Guido, he makes him [in Book V.] present his case in the best possible light, so that for the moment he arouses our intellectual sympathy'[4]. Another American professor goes further; he suggests that many readers of the poem (including himself ?), if seated on the bench, would have been disposed, after hearing Guido's arguments, to vote for his acquittal[5]. Perhaps the professors overrate the persuasiveness of the speech[6]; its separate paragraphs, many of them, are indeed as plausible as can be, but the parts are more persuasive than the whole, for the pleas which they advance are often inconsistent. Meanwhile the Book is amazingly clever, and it is full of good things; such for instance as the acid pseudo-cheerfulness of the speaker at the start, or his poignant reflections on the plight of an impoverished nobleman, outclassed by many a parvenu (see *e.g.* 67-77, 164-208), and of a disillusioned hanger-on of the Church who has swum undeftly 'on the Galilean pool'[7] (235-397); nothing could be more

[1] I. 979. [2] I. 1272-85, 1295-6.

[3] See *e.g.* Mrs. Orr, *Handbook*, p. 111: 'The speaker is no longer Count Guido Franceschini, but Guido. . . . He is indeed another man . . . for he has thrown off the mask'.—But it was perhaps only natural that the poet should introduce the speaker formally at first, and name him more compendiously afterwards.

[4] *Browning: How to know him*, p. 246.

[5] *O.Y.B.* 279.

[6] See further in the Introduction to Book XI. [7] II. 294.

adroit than his exposition of the real gist of the Franceschini-Comparini bargain (431-566), nothing more judiciously quasi-candid than his avowal of his views on love and marriage (665-753)—views which, however repulsive to us, were in accord with the opinion of the Italy of his time. But it is difficult to pick out particular passages of the Book for special praise; it is all so masterly. It ends, like the monologues of the two other chief actors, with a passage which 'ought to be referred to', wrote the Editor of the *Fortnightly* [1], 'when one wishes to know what power over the instrument of his art Mr. Browning might have achieved, if he had chosen to discipline himself in instrumentation'. Perhaps he practised this self-discipline more often than Lord Morley's words would suggest.

NOTES.

5. *Velletri*], one of the most full-bodied of Italian wines, and therefore 'fortifying' under the circumstances.

—. *vinegar and gall*], Matthew xxvii. 34, 48.

12. *Noblemen were exempt, etc.*] See Appendix VI. on all matters relating to the infliction of torture upon Guido.

46. *The father.*] See note on XI. 1878.

49. *when the purse he left held spider-webs.*] This way of describing an empty purse comes from Catullus, 13. 7-8:—

nam tui Catulli
Plenus sacculus est aranearum.

51. *tetchy.*] Cf. *La Saisiaz*, p. 22; the word is said to be corrupted from 'touchy'. It occurs several times in Shakespeare, *e.g.* in *Richard III.*, 4. 4. 168, 'Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy'.

57. *demurs thereon.*] Why not, as usual, 'thereto' or 'thereat', as in a sentence of a letter from the poet to Ruskin which I quote for its literary interest: 'I cannot begin writing poetry till my imaginary reader has conceded licences to me which you demur *at* altogether' (Ruskin's *Works*, Library Edition, xxxvi., p. xxxiv)?

58-61.] That certain worthies at Arezzo gave Guido advice, and perhaps remonstrated with him, about his treatment of Pompilia is likely enough. It is true that both the Bishop and the Governor exonerated him absolutely (*O.Y.B.* lxxx.-lxxxi., xci.-ii., *E.L.* 89-90, 99), but several respectable Aretines spoke of his ill-treatment of his wife as notorious (*O.Y.B.* liii., *E.L.* 53-4). It

[1] *Fortnightly Review*, March 1, 1869, p. 334.

appears that Paolo at Rome had been 'vexed by perpetual complaints' on the subject, which may have come from such people; he apparently thought them well-founded, for 'he did not cease to take Guido to task' (*O.Y.B.* ccxlviii., *E.L.* 245).

63. *sib.*] Cf. II. 513.

71. *lamb's head and purtenance.*] Exodus xii. 9, 'his [the lamb's] head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof'.—A servant of the Franceschini deposed: 'For the victuals of all those at table [six in number] the Franceschini used to buy a sucking lamb on Saturdays . . . which the Signora Beatrice used to portion out for the whole week'. The witness goes on to explain how thriftily her mistress dealt with the lamb's head, liver, and intestines (*O.Y.B.* li., *E.L.* 52).

74. *when three-parts water.*] The servant deposed that the wine-flask which served for the six people contained 3½ *fogliette* (about 2 pints ?) only; 'before putting the wine in the flask', she said, 'the Signora made me fill the flask half full of water, . . . and often there was more water than wine' (*O.Y.B.* lii., *E.L.* 52). Cf. II. 474.

84. *hanged or headed.*] See note on I. 350.

93. *their bastard.*] In Browning's view Guido's motive in planning the murders was to secure all Pietro's property in the name of Pompilia's child as his own heir; they were not to be committed, therefore, till after her confinement (see the Pope's argument in X. 752-74; cf. III. 1546-69, IV. 1102-6). For the success of the scheme it was plainly necessary that Guido should be ready, when the child was born, to recognize it as legitimate.

But it was still more necessary that he should not be detected as the murderer. Once detected, he had to consult for his life and not for finance; it became his interest to maintain that the child was a bastard. For, if that were so, the fact of its birth would greatly increase the force of the only arguments that he could use in his defence, viz. that he committed the murders to avenge his injured honour, and that the injury to his honour was still fresh.

The poet accordingly makes Guido in Book V. profess to believe that Caponsacchi was Gaetano's father; see line 1506, where he speaks as if the boy could only be legitimate 'by some mad miracle of chance', and 1530, where he says that it is his 'own inmost heart's confession' that he was 'the priest's bastard'; cf. 1643. The peroration of the monologue, in which Guido expresses his readiness to take the boy as his son, is a mere rhetorical appeal, however effective; he does not mean to be understood as so regarding him:—

> I take him at your word,
> Mine be he, by miraculous mercy, lords! (2027-8).

Meanwhile it is noticeable (1) that Guido's lawyers, harping as

they rightly harp on the *honoris causa* plea, and striving as they strive to prove that the murders were committed *incontinenti* (see note on VIII. 1003), say very little about Gaetano; Arcangeli is equally ready to assume that he was or was not Guido's son (*O.Y.B.* xxi., *E.L.* 22); and (2) that in Book XI. Guido almost 'forgets' to speak of him; when he remembers to do so (XI. 1847-1902), he speaks of him as his lawful son.

98. *make*], *i.e.* to make.

111. *by a notorious lie.*] The Franceschini had been in a dilemma: should they accept or deny Violante's story? Was Pompilia her child or a 'changeling' (1398)? To accept the story would have strengthened a claim for a divorce, but would have prejudiced Guido's claim to the dowry (see *O.Y.B.* cxliii.-iv., *E.L.* 147-8). Even after Guido's arrest, when an acceptance of the story would have provided him with an 'extenuating circumstance' for the murders, Browning makes the pro-Guido Half-Rome scout it (II. 603 *seqq.*).

118. *omoplat*] = 'shoulder-blade' (16 above) from Greek ὠμοπλάτη. The English word, unlike the French *omoplate*, is a purely technical term, but its use here is justifiable, for Guido is represented as having (like Browning himself) made a special study of anatomy. See XI. 291-2 (note) and 1679.

130. *owned the spiritual*], *i.e.* admitted its claims.

134. *my back of docile beast.*] A Gallicism.

142. *ancientest of Tuscan towns.*] Arretium was probably at least as old as Rome, but 'ancientest' is probably a mere patriotic claim.

143. *When my worst foe, etc.*] The anti-Guido Second Anonymous Pamphlet states, on the authority of the Arezzo records, that the Franceschini did not enjoy the primary rank of nobility but only the second (*O.Y.B.* ccxi., *E.L.* 213). In VI. 223 Caponsacchi describes his family as 'oldest now, greatest once' at Arezzo, and in VI. 1572-4 he says when at Castelnuovo:—

> We are aliens here,
> My adversary and I, called noble both;
> I am the nobler, and a name men know.

147-53.] The 'high' rivalry of Franciscans and Dominicans finds literary expression among Roman ecclesiastics at the end of the seventeenth century, and Bishop Burnet, Guido's contemporary, dwells upon it in his *Letters* from Italy (pp. 32 *seqq.*). Such rivalry was wholly alien to the spirit of their founders; it is interesting to note that in the *Paradiso* (cantos 11 and 12) Dante puts the praises of St. Francis into the mouth of the Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas, those of St. Dominic into that of the Franciscan St. Bonaventura; 'their works were to one end' (11. 42).

158. *once Homager to the Empire*], *i.e.* holder of a fief directly

under the Emperor, and therefore his 'man' (*homagium* is from *homo*). The word 'homager' is Shakespearian; see *Antony and Cleopatra*, 1. 1. 31:

> Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
> Is Cæsar's homager.

169. *Or pay that fault, etc.*], *i.e.* or should pay the penalty of being poor by not claiming the rights of nobility.

170. *lacks the flag yet lifts the pole*], *i.e.* claims the rights of nobility ('lifts the pole'), but is too poor to make the display which nobility demands ('lacks the flag').

171. *On, therefore, I must move.*] An improvement on the original 'Therefore, I must make move'.

182. *of late*], viz. when the Comparini on their return to Rome circulated pamphlets describing the Franceschini *ménage* (see note on II. 658).

190.] For Beatrice's economies in firing see *O.Y.B.* xlix., l., *E.L.* 49, 50.

201. *got to be a priest.*] See note on IV. 1541.

202-7.] Cf. VI. 321-4, where a bishop says to Caponsacchi:

> I have a heavy scholar cloistered up,
> Close under lock and key, kept at his task
> Of letting Fénelon know the fool he is,
> In a book I promise Christendom next Spring.

See also II. 179, VI. 359 *seqq.*

210.] Cf. III. 343, VIII. 1095, XI. 2142 *seqq.*

212. *The eldest son, etc.*]. A mistake; see note on III. 253.

227. *porporate.*] 'It was enacted in a constitution of Boniface VIII. in 1297 that cardinals should wear the royal purple. They are called the *porporati* to this day' (Tuker and Malleson, *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome*, Part IV. p. 447).—The word *porporati* often occurs in *O.Y.B.*

228. *Red-stockinged in the presence.*] What ecclesiastical dignitaries (if any) other than cardinals 'step red-stockinged' in the Pope's presence I do not know.—In X. 1164-5 the Pope professes to regard the red stockings of a cardinal as symbolical:

> Red-socked, how else proclaim fine scorn of flesh,
> Unchariness of blood when blood faith begs!

233. *bring the purchase back.*] The 'purchase' is the payment which he will have received for his labour in the Church's cause. Cf. III. 292-4.

249-50. *having a field, etc.*] Acts iv. 37.

253. *the villa.*] See note on II. 816.

255. *stanchion.*] For 'stanchion' as verb cf. *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*, p. 92, 'the one weak place that's stanchioned by a

lie'; *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*, II., 'Repair wreck, stanchion wall'.

270. *Three or four orders, etc.*] See note on I. 261-5.

285. Utrique sic paratus], 'thus prepared for either', *i.e.* for immediate or for deferred advancement; not, I think, for 'Church or world', as Sir F. Kenyon explains.

291. *Next year I'm only sixteen, etc.*] See note on IV. 392.

304. *a term*], *i.e.* a bust such as those of Terminus the god of boundaries, springing out of a rectangular pillar; the word is often so used in Browning, *e.g.* in *Strafford*, 5. 2. 40.

308.] The comma inserted after 'from' in the first edition of the poem perhaps makes the meaning clearer.

309. *Chamberlain.*] See note on VIII. 1084.

314. *hexastich*], epigram of six lines.

318. *Purfled*], strictly = 'fringed', 'embroidered' (French *pourfilé*), as in Chaucer, *Prologue*, 193, 'his sleves y-purfiled at the hond'; so used also by Spenser and Milton. A favourite word of Browning's in the sense 'ornamented', 'decked'; cf. *Sordello*, I. 900, and *Apollo and the Fates, ad init.* (Man's life is 'woe-purfled' or 'weal-prankt' as Lachesis may determine).

322. *a tittup*], *i.e.* a curvet; a dialectic word, 'echoic from the sound of the horse's feet' (*N.E.D.*). C.S.C.'s parody is not as happy as usual with its 'Yah! tittup! what's the odds?'

324-5.] A mistake. After his arrest Guido was 'straightway taken to the New Prisons', and the New Prisons were 'at Tor di Nonna' (*O.Y.B.* 223, 224, *E.L.* 278, 279).

The Torre di Nona (Nona is said to be a corruption of Latin *annona*; the building is called *turris annonæ* in early documents) was a tower in the city walls; originally in the possession of the Orsini, it became a papal prison as early as 1410 (Gregorovius). It was immediately S. of the Ponte S. Angelo, and still gives its name to the street which runs to the bridge by the river-side; but it was destroyed eight years before Guido's arrest (Hare, *Walks in Rome*, ii. p. 148). The Carceri Nuove, built by Innocent X. (*ibid.* p. 116), are not far off, in the Via Giulia.

In Browning's *Cenciaja* (which every reader of *The Ring and the Book* should consult) we read of a Marchese, accused of matricide in 1599, as confined in 'Tordinona-prison'.

345. *my seventh climacteric*], the age of 49. For Guido's real age see note on II. 291.

347. *fed by the east-wind.*] Cf. *e.g.* Job xv. 2: 'Should a wise man . . . fill his belly with the east wind?' (*i.e.* the sirocco from the desert).

—. *fulsome-fine*], richly overfed, fed to satiety; cf. *The Inn Album*, p. 103:

> Or fattened, fulsome, have you fed on me,
> Sucked out my substance?

357. *The sisters are well wedded away.*] See note on IV. 381 *seqq.*

364. *one limes flocks of thrushes there.*] Cf. XI. 930, where Guido speaks of 'trapping field-fares' at Vittiano. For the liming of small birds in Italy see Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 448; for their use as food see *ibid.* p. 380 and XI. 1908, note.

378. *with neither cross nor pile*], *i.e.* penniless. As 'cross' is one side of a coin (see note on III. 401), so 'pile' is the other. It 'took its name from the pile or short pillar on which the coin rested when struck' (Skeat). 'Cross or pile' usually means 'heads or tails'; *N.E.D.* quotes from Mill's *Logic*, iii. 18, § 1: 'Why, in tossing up a halfpenny, do we reckon it equally probable that we shall throw cross or pile?'

389. *In shagrag beard.*] Cf. *Aristophanes' Apology*, p. 130, where Aristophanes, speaking of the ragged ('bruised and battered') heroes for bringing whom upon the stage he taunted Euripides, calls them his 'shag-rag hero-race'.

395. *some poor prize.*] The other gamesters, I suppose, make up a purse for him. Guido's 'poor prize' is to be some small benefaction, presumably, from his cardinal.

402. sors . . . *Virgilian dip.*] Cf. X. 297, 'if we dip in Virgil here and there, etc.'. As a famous seventeenth-century *sors Virgiliana* the following passage, which Charles I. found when he dipped into the *Æneid*, may be quoted:—

'Distressed in war by an armed and gallant nation, driven homeless from its borders, rent from Iülus' embrace . . . when he hath yielded him to the terms of a harsh peace . . . may he have no joy of his kingdom . . . but let him fall before his day' (*Æn.* iv. 615-20: Mackail's translation).

406. *Count you are counted*]=not simply, 'you are a count', but 'you are a count who counts'. 'There is small respect in Rome for new titles . . . and the expression *Conti che non contano* ("counts who do not count") has been a proverbial pun for ages' (Marion Crawford, *Fortnightly Review*, July 1885).—See note on I. 173.

416. *The cits enough, etc.*], *i.e.* highly prosperous *bourgeois* who aimed at being something more; cf. II. 197, IV. 478-80. I cannot find an exact parallel to the use of 'enough'.

443. *taking*], *i.e.* taking away.

451. *Guarded and guided.*] A favourite phrase of Browning's, here used less gravely than usual. Cf. *e.g.* II. 944, V. 816, *A Death in the Desert*, 172. See note on IX. 1039.

458. *prizer*]=prize-fighter; cf. *Luria*, I:

> once the brace of prizers fairly matched,
> Polcaxe with poleaxe, knife with knife as good.

In *As you like it*, 2. 3 8, Charles the wrestler is called 'the bonny priser of the humorous duke'.

481. *Preposterous terms* ?], *i.e.* did they call the terms preposterous ?

488-9. *Pietro of Cortona . . . His scholar Ciro Ferri.*] Cf. IX. 114-17 :—

> who hath long surpassed the Florentine,
> The Urbinate and . . . what if I dared add,
> Even his master, yea the Cortonese,—
> I mean the accomplished Ciro Ferri, Sirs !

Pietro (Berrettini) da Cortona (1597–1669) is best known for his allegorical ceiling-paintings in the Pitti Palace at Florence ; they are in the baroque style of the period. In some of them he was assisted by his pupil Ciro Ferri (1634–89), a now forgotten artist who —so Bottini was given to understand— surpassed Michael Angelo, Raphael, and even Pietro himself !—There are some interesting allusions to this Pietro in Browning's *Beatrice Signorini*.

494. *I falsified, etc.*] On the subject of these falsifications the anti-Guido pamphleteer declared that the Arezzo tax-registers proved that Guido did not possess even one soldo of the 1700 scudi which he had stated to be his income in the inventory of his property which he had supplied to the Comparini (*O.Y.B.* ccix., ccxi., *E.L.* 211, 213). His supporter admitted that his income was much less than that amount, but contended that he had over-stated it under pressure from Violante, to remove Pietro's misgivings about the proposed marriage (*O.Y.B.* cxlii., *E.L.* 146). Browning makes Guido defend himself here in an airier manner (cf. IV. 527-50) ; the mis-statement was mere 'garnishry' which did not affect the real 'gist' of the bargain.

523-4.] Ecclesiastes i. 14 *seqq.*

529. *spoons Fire-new*]=brand-new ; cf. *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister*, III., 'With a fire-new spoon we're furnished'. Shakespeare, who is said to have coined 'fire-new', often uses it figuratively (*King Lear*, 5. 3. 132, *Richard III.*, 1. 3. 256, *Twelfth Night*, 3. 2. 23 ; Armado is described in *Love's Labour's Lost*, 1. 1. 179, as 'a man of fire-new words') ; cf. XI. 364, 'Our fire-new gospel is re-tinkered law'.

539-52.] A banished prince will endure humble fare, just as a salamander endures fire, but will be sorely tried by the vulgar company which he will have to keep ; there his resemblance to the salamander ceases—it will make him 'frizzle'. But to the well-fed Roman *bourgeois* and *bourgeoise* it was just the humble fare at Arezzo that was unendurable ; to the other kind of trial they were not exposed.

541-2.] 'All the winter long little portable furnaces smoke wherein they [the great brown Roman chestnuts] are roasting, to be sold at twenty for a *baiocco*, and many an old wife sits by, "with chestnuts on her lap" ' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 382).

542. *baioc.*] See note on I. 324.

546. *frizzles at the babe to kiss.*] It will be remembered that it was at the 'babe to kiss' that the blue candidate at the Eatanswill election, who was ready to do everything else, was inclined to boggle.

558-66.] 'I won't answer', says Guido, 'in the high tragic vein; I simply refer your lordships to the evidence of comedies and story-books which reveal people's true selves, to show that the conduct of the Comparini was due to "purblind greed"'.

560. *Ser Franco's merry Tales.*] Franco Sacchetti (*c.* 1335–1410) was a younger contemporary of Boccaccio (1313–1375), and a writer of *novelle* in the manner of the *Decameron*. Guido should not have called him his 'townsman', for he was a Florentine.

There is another reference to Sacchetti in V. 1153, and perhaps a third in XI. 261.

562-3.] After 'a vizard from a face' one would expect 'its padding from a body' rather than 'a body from its padding'.—By the words 'a soul—it styles itself' Guido seems to mean that the writers in question strip away all the claims to high motives by which the frothy ignorance of fools leads them to believe that they are actuated.

581-2.] Genesis ii. 24; Matthew xix. 5.

588-90.] A veiled allusion, I think, to Pompilia's indignant rejection of Girolamo's immoral advances; see 640-41 below, and the note on II. 500.

594. *troll.*] Browning means by 'to troll' to say glibly or smoothly; cf. XII. 849, 'Say this as silverly as tongue can troll'. The verb is used both by Shakespeare (*Tempest*, 3. 2. 126; see Clarendon Press note there) and by Milton.

597. *at spring of year.*] During carnival?

617.] See Appendix III.

630. *cast out, and happily so.*] Happily for the Comparini, who were thus absent from Arezzo when 'the abominable' came upon Pompilia. Cf. III. 531, where they are said to have 'fled away for their lives, and lucky so'.

632. *Woe worth the poor young wife.*] In the phrase 'woe worth' (*e.g.* in 'Woe worth the day'—Ezekiel xxx. 2) 'worth' = 'becomes', 'is', or else 'let it become', 'let it be'. 'Woe worth the day' is generally explained 'woe be *to* the day'; but is not 'woe' in such phrases an adjective? Cf. *e.g. Tempest*, 5. 1. 139, 'I am woe for't', Shakespeare's 71st Sonnet, 8, 'If thinking on me then should make you woe'. (In *Old Mortality*, c. vii., some one says: 'I will be wae to hear o' your affliction'.)

640-41. *the satyr-love Of who but my own brother.*] See note on II. 500-503.

658. *Swans are soft.*] But Pompilia was not soft as a swan; she proved to be a cockatrice.

672. *From Thyrsis to Neæra.*] These names of pastoral lovers have found their way from Theocritus and Virgil into modern poetry.

673. *Provençal roses in his shoe.*] In *Hamlet* (3. 2. 288) 'a forest of feathers' and 'two Provincial roses on my razed shoes' are mentioned as accessories of a smart actor's costume. The 'Provincial roses' are ribbon-rosettes of the shape and colour of the double damask rose called Rose de Provence or, more properly, de Provins (a place near Paris where this rose is said to have been brought by the crusaders). Cf. XI. 1100-3, 'the hundred-petalled Provence prodigy . . . the kind That's queen'.

705. *To do hawk's service*], *i.e.* to obey.

—. *at the Rotunda.*] The Piazza of the Pantheon (Santa Maria della Rotonda). 'You will find gathered around the fountain in the Piazza . . . a number of bird-fanciers surrounded by cages in which are multitudes of living birds for sale. Here are Java sparrows, parrots and parroquets, grey thrushes and nightingales, redbreasts, yellow canary birds, beautiful sweet-singing little goldfinches, and gentle ringdoves, all chattering, singing, and cooing together' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 380).—The Pantheon itself is commonly called the Rotonda by Romans; Gilbert Burnet, Guido's contemporary, always calls it by that name in his *Letters* from Italy.

708.] I may have paid far too much, says Guido, but I want some sort of value for my money. I have paid 'my name and style, my hope And trust, my all' (711-12).

709. *hoodwink, starve and properly train my bird.*] See *Shakespeare's England*, xxvii. § 2 ('Falconry', by the Hon. Gerald Lascelles), where the process of 'hoodwinking' is described. To 'hoodwink' is to blindfold by throwing a hood over the eyes (? the 'winkers'). Mr. Lascelles says that the hawk 'must be brought to her bearings by fatigue—*never by starvation*, for that is her ruin'. Bartholomew Anglicus (*De Proprietatibus Rerum*, p. 120, ed. Steele) says of the goshawk: 'She must have ordinate diet, nother too scarce, ne too full. For by too much meat she waxeth ramaious [*i.e.* slow]. . . . And if the meat be too scarce, then she faileth, and is feeble and unmighty to take her prey'.

710. *should she prove a haggard.*] The haggard is a hawk which has fully moulted at least once before she is trained. If fine-tempered and naturally docile she may be very valuable, for the falconer finds in her 'no amateur', but already 'a professional expert'. She may however prove 'untrainable, or be more trouble to reclaim than she is worth'; and Shakespeare, like Browning here, uses the word with this fact in view, *e.g.* in *Othello*, 3. 3. 260-63 (Othello is speaking of Desdemona):

> If I do prove her haggard,
> Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
> I'ld whistle her off and let her down the wind,
> To prey at fortune.

See *Shakespeare's England*, *loc. cit.*

715. *my falcon-gentle.*] The term was applied, according to Mr. Lascelles, to the whole species of peregrine hawks. 'Gentle', according to a writer quoted by Professor Dowden on *Romeo and Juliet*, 2. 2. 160, distinguished the nobler peregrine from the gos-hawk.

723-4.] 1 Corinthians vii. 9.

727.] Ephesians v. 23 *seqq.*

728-9.] You may find insubordinate underlings in the Church, just as you may find refractory wives in marriage.

738.] St. Francis, while inculcating labour, taught his followers to trust to heaven for the supply of their necessities.

738.] Did St. Francis use the manna-metaphor when teaching his disciples to take no thought for what they should eat? 'Quails' were of course suggested by Numbers xi. 31-2.

740. *the Levite-rule*], *i.e.* the rule for deacons; 'levites' became a name for deacons in very early Christian times.

748. *Put case.*] Elsewhere obsolete, but often found in Browning; cf. *e.g.* VIII. 1485, IX. 307, 815.

766.] See note on II. 658.

768-72.] The story is told with full detail in IV. 146-91.

770. *by-blow bastard-babe.*] See note on IV. 612.

781. *their reckoning*], *i.e.* their punishment (see 783).

805. *them*] must mean Pietro and Violante, to whom however reference is made in the second person earlier in the sentence.

809.] The apodosis to the long conditional clauses which begin here does not come till 827 ('what a friend were he!'). So in the long sentence 938-66 the apodosis does not begin till 963.

811. *Locusta*], the professional female poisoner in the reigns of Claudius and Nero; we read of her in Tacitus and Juvenal.

816. *guarding, guiding.*] See note on 451 above.

823. *If he become no partner.*] Originally 'Refuse to become partner'; similarly in 827 'Ah, if he did thus' was originally 'Ah, did he do thus'. The reiteration of 'if' keeps the structure of the sentence clearer as we read; and 'did he do' is inelegant.

835.] For the letter to Paolo see Appendix IV.

839. *praises*], *i.e.* of Guido; the letter says: '. . . wishing to be a good Christian and a good wife to Signor Guido my husband, who often reproved me in a loving manner, and said that one day I should thank him, etc.' (*O.Y.B.* lv., *E.L.* 57).

850. *the Bilboa.*] Bilboa (Bilbao) in Spain was famous from the beginning of the Christian era for the manufacture of iron and steel. Its name is applied by Shakespeare not only to a sword-blade (*Merry Wives*, 1. 1. 165, 3. 5. 112) but also to chains (*Hamlet*, 5. 2. 6, 'Methought I lay worse than the mutines in the bilboes').

853. *practice*], *i.e.* artifice.

859. *Was marching in.*] 'Marching in mere' originally. The change makes 'I myself, etc.' a relative clause instead of an apposi-

tion to the 'I' of line 854. Did Browning think that alliteration was overdone in 'myself marching in mere marital'?

867.] The 'save' of the illustrated edition is a misprint for 'saved'.

876. *rang.*] Why did the poet alter the 'called' of his first edition? 'Called' keeps up the idea of temptation, and 'coppice called' is not an unpleasant alliteration.

878 *seqq.*] The assertion that Pompilia had many lovers at Arezzo was made by Guido in the Process of Flight, and was quoted by both his lawyers in the murder-trial. He said in his evidence: 'She stands convicted as an adulteress . . . for many like excesses which I have heard since that she committed with other persons' (*O.Y.B.* cxxvii., *E.L.* 135; cf. *O.Y.B.* cvii., *E.L.* 116).

897. *where the theatre lent its lodge*], *i.e.* its 'box'; the French *loge*.

922. Stans pede in uno.] From Horace, *Sat.* 1. 4. 10; explained 'as a proverbial expression meaning "as an easy thing", something that you could do without needing both feet' (Wickham).

923. *In the one case*], 918-20; 'plainsong' echoes 'plainly'.

925. *in the other*], 921-2; Guido can't make his defence 'standing on one foot'; he aches and needs a chair.

931], *i.e.* exhortation backed by threats of small penalties and promises of small rewards.

933. *threatenings . . . slaughter.*] Acts ix. 1.

936. *the dead guilty three.*] Compare 978 and contrast 1687. See Introduction to this Book.

938-66.] See note on 809 above.

948-51.] Cf. VII. 1249-51, IX. 380-81. Guido's threats to kill Pompilia by poison or by the sword are often mentioned in the records; the evidence for them is Pompilia's deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiii.-iv., *E.L.* 91-2): 'They [Guido and Beatrice] continued perpetually to threaten my life. . . . My husband continued to ill-treat me and to threaten my life, and (said) that he wished to kill me. . . . He pointed a pistol at my breast, saying, "O Christ! who keeps me from laying you out here?" . . . I was afraid that, if he didn't kill me with arms, he might poison me'.

951. *bugaboo*]=bogy.

967. *Malchus.*] John xviii. 10; cf. IX. 1173.

971-3.] Matthew xxvii. 5-8; John xiii. 26.

987 *seqq.*] *O.Y.B.* v.-vii., *E.L.* 5-7, and elsewhere.

1000. *intelligence*], secret (immoral) communications. 'Intelligencing' is applied in *Winter's Tale* (2. 3. 68) as an epithet to a go-between in such communications.

1006.] There is much in the love-letters about these absences of Guido.

1012-13.] The different statements of Guido's neighbours about the hour of the flight echo variations in the depositions. 'At

dawn I went downstairs, where I found Caponsacchi', says Pompilia (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv., *E.L.* 93). 'At about seven hours' (*i.e.* about 1 A.M.; see note on IV. 1371) 'she came alone to the gate', says Caponsacchi (*O.Y.B.* lxxxix., *E.L.* 96). The sentence of the Criminal Court says *alle* 7 *ore di notte* (*O.Y.B.* v., *E.L.* 5).

1016. *your own cousin Guillichini.*] For Guillichini and his part in the flight see note on II. 934.

1018-19. *made prize of all, Including your wife.*] As is stated in the sentence of the Criminal Court of Florence, *O.Y.B.* vii., *E.L.* 6.

1020-29.] See note on VI. 1080-83.

1026. *a calash*]=Italian *calesse*; the word is applied in the records by Pompilia, Caponsacchi, and the lawyers to the carriage used in the flight.

1036.] See above, 935 and 980-85.

1040. *head of me, heart of me, etc.*] Cf. *Fifine at the Fair*, Epilogue, I., 'Head of me, heart of me, stupid as a stone'.

1046.] In Isaiah xiv. 12 ('How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!') the king of Babylon in his fall is compared to the morning star. The application of the verse to the fall of Satan from heaven is as old as St. Jerome.

1049-51.] For Caponsacchi's 'laic dress' see note on II. 999.

1055. *the league, the one post more.*] See note on III. 1201.

1058. *—the tenderer sex—.*] Cf. IX. 225, 'the weaker sex, my lords, the weaker sex!'

1077-8.] Cf. 1082. Guido usually speaks of Pompilia's guilt as having been indisputably proved at the time of the flight, but he professes to have been ready to put it to a 'final test' (1626) by his 'Open to Caponsacchi!' on the fatal evening.

1081. *thrice.*] Since the flight Guido had only once sought unsuccessfully a legal remedy for his alleged wrong, viz. in the Process of Flight—or twice, if we are to include the proceedings at Arezzo, in which, however, he was not altogether unsuccessful.

1082-4.] The meaning of these lines is clear enough as far as the word 'blot', but the following words ('which breaks—for fear of mine') are puzzling. I offer an explanation with no great confidence.

'At the time of the flight', says Guido, 'it was perhaps just possible to believe that the conduct of Pompilia and Caponsacchi was a passing indiscretion, but by the time of the murders it had been proved to be a "solid" crime of the very deepest dye—a crime in the presence of which even the blackness of hell turns pale, loses its solidity, and falls away as though stripped off in flakes'. It does so, he adds, 'for fear of mine'. Of my what? Apparently of 'my black' (*i.e.* blackness) or of 'my blot'; probably the latter, but the two mean much the same. Can 'my blot' (or 'my black') be the crime with which I confront it, viz. that of Pompilia and Caponsacchi? Perhaps; but 'blot' may have had a double

meaning in Browning's mind, referring also to the 'ulcer' engendered in Guido's soul (1168-70; cf. 1706) by the shame to which he had been exposed.

1106-7.] Acts xxii. 3.

1114. *amercement*], *i.e.* penalty.

1124. *my own sword.*] See note on II. 1031.

1125. *to try conclusions.*] 'Conclusions' formerly often meant 'experiments', as *e.g.* in *Antony and Cleopatra*, 5. 2. 358, 'She hath pursued conclusions infinite Of easy ways to die', and this is the meaning of the word in the phrase 'to try conclusions' as used by Shakespeare; see *Hamlet*, 3. 4. 195 and *Merchant of Venice*, 2. 2. 39 (where, however, young Gobbo corrupts it into 'try confusions'); cf. *Fifine at the Fair*, XXVII., where 'to try conclusions with mankind' is explained by 'to experiment on' men; *ibid.* lv. In the modern use of the phrase, as the *N.E.D.* points out, 'conclusions'=the issue, result, as here; cf. IV. 1187, XI. 846.

1128.] The comma at the end of the line should be removed.

1130. *with proper clapping and applause.*] See note on II. 1043-8.

1137. *succubus*], female demon.

1140. *Now, poetry . . . Now, prose.*] See note on VI. 1558-9.

1141-9.] In the love-letters there are many allusions (1) to *Il Geloso* and (2) to his absences from Arezzo; also (3) to the colour of the wine drunk by the Franceschini family, *e.g.* 'If they continue to drink the red wine, I let you know'; 'The Signora is drinking wine . . . red like ours'; 'With respect to what you wish to know about the wine, I tell you that it is red just now'; 'Tell me what have I to do, that I may do it' (*O.Y.B.* xcii.-vii., *E.L.* 100-4). As to the wine, Guido dots the i's and crosses the t's.

1152. *Both in a breath protested.*] See their depositions (*O.Y.B.* lxxxvi., xc.-xci., *E.L.* 94, 97-8).

1153. *Sacchetti again.*] See note on 560 above.

1161. *by my fay.*] Chaucer writes 'by my fey'; 'fey'=French *foi*, the older form of *foi*. Shakespeare has 'by my fay' in *Hamlet*, 2. 2. 271, *Romeo and Juliet*, 1. 5. 128.

1174. *Law renovates even Lazarus.*] By 'law' Guido means 'Nature, which is God' (1171); but he proceeds to identify this law with the law administered in the papal courts (1175-6).

1175.] Acts xxv. 12.—See note on II. 1018.

1177-1239.] See note on IV. 1218-79.

1197-8.] Matthew xviii. 12.

1209-10.] Catullus, some of whose poems are most 'unseemly', was habitually called *doctus* by the Roman poets who followed him —Tibullus, Ovid, Martial. Meanwhile *doctus* may be regarded as merely a standing epithet of a good poet; Horace, for instance, speaks of the ivy-crown as the reward of 'learned foreheads' (*doctarum frontium*). Catullus 'exercised a perfect fascination over

the Italians' after the Renaissance (Burckhardt, *The Renaissance in Italy*, p. 264). Cf. the allusion in VI. 386-8.

1214-25.] I shall quote the decree of the Court in the Process of Flight in the note on VI. 2007-22. It will be observed that Guido follows the language of this decree closely in lines 1218-22, translating literally the words *complicitas, deviatio, relegatus.* Lines 1223-5 are an addition of Guido's; no sentence was pronounced upon Pompilia, who was merely consigned, pending further investigation, to the Scalette.

1249. *You erred i' the person.*] See below, 1316 *seqq.*

1264. *the Helen and the Paris.*] We have had the comparison of Pompilia and Caponsacchi to Helen and Paris already, from Half-Rome (II. 1003-6).

1275-7.] The 'sulphur' and the 'sops-in-wine' of line 1277 are primarily, as the context shows, the 'commiseration', the 'grins', the 'sarcasms' and so forth, which Guido met with during and after his return to Arezzo in the year 1697; in comparison with these indignities he professes to regard the bodily torture which he has just undergone as the merest trifle. But his metaphors have probably a wider reference, including all his mental sufferings, real or pretended, since his marriage; 'Four years', he says at the beginning of his speech (see above, 20-38), 'have I been operated on i' the soul', and

> This getting tortured in the flesh
> Amounts to a'most an agreeable change.

The word 'sulphur' is used in IV. 1189 of the effect alleged to have been produced upon him when he became aware of the incidents of Pompilia's flight; in V. 1136 he speaks of the pretended discovery of the love-letters as showing that 'the witches' circle' was 'intact'. 'Sops-in-wine' (of which Bacon says that they are more potent than wine itself) may have been suggested by the opiates with which he declared that Pompilia had drugged his drink.

1282. *Ultima Thule.*] Virgil, *Georg.* 1. 30. The island of Thule, first mentioned by a Greek geographer of the fourth century B.C., was vaguely placed in the far north by later writers; 'six days' sail north of Britain', says Pliny. From a reference in Tacitus (*Agricola*, 10) it has been identified with Mainland in the Shetlands; it may have been Iceland.

1283. *Proxima Civitas.*] Civitavecchia, 40 miles from Rome—'a good half-dozen hours' ride off' (1339, below).

1300. *Cancel me quick, etc.*] See note on III. 1480.

1304. *The Abate is about it*] as Guido's representative under a *mandatum procuræ* (*O.Y.B.* clvii., *E.L.* 162).

1309-18.] Arcangeli says that Guido postponed his vengeance 'so long as he had a hope of dissolving the marriage on the ground

of a mistake about the person married, being ignorant of the passages in the Canon Law which show that a mistake about the quality (*qualitas*) of the person does not make a marriage void, but only a mistake about the individual' (*O.Y.B.* cxv., *E.L.* 124). The apposite Rachel-Leah illustration (from Genesis xxix.) is Browning's own.

1332-7. *this their house is not the house, etc.*] A mistake; see Appendix II.

1345.] The sentence which begins here does not end till 1372. The verb ('drowns') to which 'brother Paul' (1346) is the nominative does not come till 1368.

1347.] For this 'vain attempt' see note on III. 1471-7.

1357. *in Ovid's art*], as displayed, for example, in his *Ars Amatoria*.

1358. *his Summa.*] The *Summa Theologiæ* of Thomas Aquinas (cf. VI. 484, 1025), the text-book of Roman Catholic students.

1359. *to act Corinna.*] The Corinna in question is Ovid's mistress, not of course the poetess who rivalled Pindar, though the B. and H. notes so explain.

1365. merum sal.] The phrase is from Lucretius (4. 1162), who says that a lover will pronounce his dwarfish mistress to be χαρίτων μία, *tota merum sal* ('from top to toe all grace'). In Afranius, 30, *quidquid loquitur, merum sal est*, the meaning is probably the same. Here *merum sal* means 'very spicy'.

1366-73.] See note on III. 1540-41.

1372. *Britain almost divided from our orb.*] Virgil, *Ecl.* 1. 67, *penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.*

1384-5.] It was Violante, not Pompilia, who being refused a fire at Arezzo found the cold intolerable; see the evidence of the servant in *O.Y.B.* xlix., l., *E.L.* 49, 50.

1389. *acrid with the toad's-head-squeeze.*] See note on II. 1376-7.

1409-11. *in the cavern, etc.*], *i.e.* in the pit which they digged to trap me; on the top of it they have laid the 'paving-stone of shame' to prevent my escape.

1442. *the three suits.*] See note on IV. 1305-27.

1450-52.] Caponsacchi, given his antecedents as described by Browning, would have been more likely to 'travesty *De Raptu Helenæ*' in Latin seazons for the amusement of his scholarly friends (see VI. 1747) than to hitch Guido's hap 'into a rattling ballad rhyme'.

1454-5. *this Christmas time, Beating the bagpipes.*] See Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 8. The allusion is to the visit paid to Rome in December by peasants from the Abruzzi who are called *pifferari*. They go (or went formerly) about in pairs, one playing on the bagpipe (*zampogna*), the other on the pastoral pipe (*piffero*). 'For the month before Christmas', wrote Story (about 1860), 'the sound of their instruments resounds through the streets of Rome wherever there is a shrine,—whether at the corners of the streets, in

the depths of the shops, down little lanes, in the centre of the Corso, in the interior courts of the palaces, or on the stairways of private houses'. Mr. Bagot (*My Italian Year*, c. viii.) says that the practice is centuries old, and that it 'seemed to bring the scene at Bethlehem more vividly to the imagination than any of our Northern carols' —*seemed*, for of late years he has noticed that the bagpipes play 'rather in honour of the wine-flask than in that of the Nativity'.

1469. *Lawful.*] See note on 2027 below.

1471. *last Wednesday.*] According to one of the lawyers (*O.Y.B.* clxxxiv., *E.L.* 189) on December 18, which was a Wednesday.

1478. *he's already hidden away and safe.*] Arcangeli argues (*O.Y.B.* xxi., *E.L.* 22) that the hiding away of the boy, if he was legitimate, was bound to excite Guido's anger; see also the First Anonymous Pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* cxlviii., *E.L.* 152.

1504-5.] The Leviathan-passage in Job (chapter xli.) is used again in VIII. 1738-42 (where see note), and more elaborately in X. 1102-11.

1519 *seqq.*] Contrast Guido's franker words about a son and heir in XI. 1847 *seqq.*

1549. Quis est pro Domino ?] Exodus xxxii. 26 (*A.V.*): 'Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side ? let him come unto me': he is about to take vengeance on the calf-idolaters. The actual words of the Vulgate are *Si quis est Domini.*

1550-51.] The evidence of Guido and of his accomplices, quoted by Spreti (*O.Y.B.* cxxviii., cxxx., *E.L.* 135, 137), shows that the negotiations between them took place at Vittiano.

1557. *brained . . . staked . . . paunched.*] Suggested by *The Tempest*, 3. 2. 96, 98, 'That thou mayst brain him . . . or paunch him with a stake'.

1565.] Cf. VI. 2001, 'in a clown's disguise'. The prosecution argued in the trial that it was an aggravation of Guido's crime that he entered Pietro's house *cum mutatione vestimentorum* (*O.Y.B.* lxvi., *E.L.* 70); in such a case the authorities regarded a homicide as *commissum ex insidiis.* See the answer to this which Browning puts into the mouth of Arcangeli (VIII. 1315 *seqq.*). Arcangeli is made to describe the dress in which Guido committed the murders as the same as that in which the Secondary Source says that he was executed (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 266).

1581. *on Christmas Eve.*] The child was born (see note on 1471 above) on Wednesday, December 18; by Tuesday, December 24, the news having travelled to Arezzo, Guido had made his way to Rome. The records give no explanation of the contrast between his hot haste to make the journey and his delay when he had made it—he stayed at Rome inactively from December 24 to January 2. Browning makes Guido give such an explanation in the next paragraph.

1588. *the house, my brother's once.*] Paolo's villa near the Ponte Molle (see note on IV. 1365).

1597. *only heard.*] Gives a better rhythm than the original 'heard only'.

1613. *a death-watch-tick.*] Cf. *Mesmerism*, II.: 'at night, when doors are shut . . . And the death-watch ticks'.

1626. *the experiment, the final test.*] See note on III. 1599.

1634. *Opened.*] Note the effectiveness of this fateful word, beginning the line and abruptly ending the paragraph.

1655-7. *Violante Comparini . . . Opened.*] See the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263: 'The door was opened to him. Immediately the scoundrel Franceschini . . . leapt upon Violante who had opened it, and dashed her dead upon the ground'.

1673. *Twenty miles off, etc.*] See note on III. 1633-6.

1683. *Do you tell me, four?*] This seems to fix the date of the monologue as January 6: but see the Introduction to this Book.

1687. *my wife is still alive.*] See Introduction.

1694. *he too tells his story, etc.*] See Introduction to Book VI.; Guido is mistaken in supposing that Caponsacchi's story will be 'florid' and 'smooth'!

1701. *who took, etc.*], *i.e.* God.

1722. *Did I so scheme?*] See Introduction to Book XI.

1723. *with a warrant, etc.*] See note on III. 1628-9.

1725. *I had gained the frontier.*] The Pope (X. 830-32) says that with horses from Rome

> 'twere the easy task
> Of hours told on the fingers of one hand
> To reach the Tuscan frontier.

1737. *the* acquetta *and the silent way.*] See note on IV. 1069:—

> The silent *acquetta*, stilling at command—
> A drop a day i' the wine or soup, the dose.

In the lines which follow those quoted other 'silent ways' are suggested as possible.

1738. *Clearly my life was valueless*], or I shouldn't have risked it as I did.

1752-60.] See note on III. 1471-7.

1764. *either*] the higher law or the law of the land.

1781. *Justinian's Pandects.*] The Pandects (πάνδεκται='all-receivers') were a Digest, made by Justinian's orders (A.D. 530–33), of the decisions of those Roman jurisconsults who had been 'patented', *i.e.* authorized by the emperors to give opinions which were to have legal force with the tribunals.

1784. *the speech they called but would not come*], *i.e.* which they called for, but which would not come. The omission of the relative as subject after its omission as object goes beyond the licence which Browning usually allows himself.

1789. *Come, unreservedly,—favour none nor fear,—*] 'None' is absent from the original edition, probably by a mere misprint. If the omission was deliberate, 'favour nor fear' = 'neither favour nor fear'—an idiom which, though not uncommon, would be employed very harshly here. 'None' perhaps improves the rhythm of the line.

1794. "*Specify?*"], *i.e.* Do you tell me to specify how I served the Church?

1795-6.] See note on III. 407-8.

1801-2.] The cardinal who interposed was not, as here stated, Guido's late patron Nerli, but Paolo's patron Lauria, who died soon after the marriage; see note on III. 481 *segq.*

1809. *I wished the thing invalid, etc.*] See note on III. 1480.

1831-4.] Cf. III. 972-1013.

1848. *Rather than*] 'side with, aid and abet' (1845); Browning has forgotten that he added 'in cruelty'.

1852. *your predecessors*] the Bishop and the Governor.

1854. *their*], *i.e.* posterity's.

1860-65.] Cf. X. 838-41.

1865. *any lie will serve*] to secure your condemnation by posterity. You may be condemned on any of the (false) grounds mentioned in lines 1855-65, just as the Arezzo authorities are absurdly condemned on the grounds mentioned in 1835-51.

1903-14.] The sentence of 'the Commissioner at Arezzo', confirmed by the Criminal Court of Florence, is given in *O.Y.B.* v.-viii., *E.L.* 5-7. Contrast with what Guido here says the comments of Caponsacchi on 'the two tales to suit the separate courts' (VI. 2043-58), and the Pope's scathing pronouncement on the 'strange shameful judgment' of the court at Arezzo (X. 834).

1913. *the Stinche.*] The prison at Florence; see note on IV. 1516.

1920. *which the aim and end.*] Originally 'the sole aim and end'; here as elsewhere Browning added on revision a much-needed relative pronoun.

1932. *comfit-pelting past discretion's law.*] See note on VII. 1015. The *confetti*-throwing during Carnival 'forced every one in the street [*i.e.* the Corso] or within reach of it to wear a shield of thin wire netting to guard the face, and thick gloves to shield the hands' (Marion Crawford, *Ave Roma Immortalis*, i. p. 196).

1957-82.] Note the vigour of this long and involved sentence. Such long sentences in Browning are often condemned, but they are often very effective; they express most dramatically the persistency of speakers who having a complicated thought or emotion pressing for utterance, utter it in one breath, perhaps ungrammatically, with all its complications. We may compare them with like sentences in Cromwell's speeches, or again in St. Paul's epistles, many of which, as has been pointed out, were not deliberately written by their author, but dictated to an amanuensis.

'The grammatical construction is often broken . . . from a desire to clear up obscurities at once and to forestall possible misconceptions. His style . . . hurries eagerly on, regardless of formal rules, inserting full explanations in a parenthesis, trusting to repetitions to restore the original connexion, and above all depending on emphasis to drive the meaning home'. These words, written about St. Paul's epistles (Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 47), are just as applicable to many passages in Browning.

A special example, where persistency of *purpose* is admirably reflected in a persistently long sentence, will be found in the poet's *Mesmerism*.

1965-6], *i.e.* satisfy their otherwise insatiable hunger for vengeance upon me by means of my son, as explained in what follows.

1985. *what did you say?*] 'For reparation, etc.' is substituted for 'for justice', as expressing more completely the purpose of the judges in the Process of Flight.

2003. *law's mere executant.*] Professor Hodell notes that this is 'possibly suggested' by a passage quoted by Arcangeli in *O.Y.B.* xxviii., *E.L.* 29: *pro amore pudicitiæ porrigere ferrum maritis non est leges calcare, sed condere.*

2009-11. *a soldier-bee, etc.*] Cf. Virgil, *Georg.* 4. 237, where it is said that bees

> venenum
> Morsibus inspirant, et spicula cæca relinquunt
> Adfixae venis, animasque in vulnere ponunt.

'Exenterate' (=disembowelled) was—so it appears from the *N.E.D.*—first anglicized by Southey.

2014. *there's the mother's age to help.*] Guido parades his filial dutifulness, just as Paolo parades it on his behalf in III. 318. Dr. Berdoe very strangely supposed that the reference is to Pompilia ('he has work to do; *his wife* may live and need his help')!

2017. *The fugitive brother.*] Paolo; see note on III. 1540-41.

2019. *suit and service.*] See note on II. 286.

2020. *those stones that Shimei flung.*] 2 Samuel xvi. 5-14.

2021. *the spirit-broken youth, etc.*] Girolamo; see note on II. 500-503. Guido must have had his tongue in his cheek here.

2027. *Whom law makes mine.*] See above, 1469, and IX. 1324-7:

> In wedlock born, law holds
> Baseness impossible: since "*filius est*
> *Quem nuptiæ demonstrant*," twits the text
> Whoever dares to doubt.

2027-8.] See note on 93 above.

2037.] The 'when'-clause, which ends in 2047, has no verb.

2045. *men of Belial.*] Guido uses the phrase because of its application in 1 Samuel ii. 12 and 22 to the licentious sons of Eli.

BOOK VI.—GIUSEPPE CAPONSACCHI

INTRODUCTION

In Books VI. and VII. we are at the very core of the poem; they set forth, in the noblest verse, the noble romance which Browning evolved from his ignoble, prosaic, unromantic Yellow Book. It was necessary to the poet's design that his two chief actors should 'say their say'[1], and for a monologue by Pompilia an occasion was suggested in the records by the attestations of the persons of credit who attended her upon her death-bed[2]. For a monologue by Caponsacchi the records suggest no occasion. We find assertions, seemingly unwarranted, that in spite of his relegation to Civita he had been haunting the abode of Pompilia[3], and as Guido pleaded the alleged fact in his defence Caponsacchi might well have been summoned by the prosecution to refute them; but the Yellow Book conveys no hint that he was actually summoned either for that or for any other purpose. The poet had therefore to create his occasion, and he created it with consummate judgment. He represents his hero as confronting the judges in his first wild sorrow and fierce indignation, as confronting them, not as a mere witness to answer their questions, but as *amicus curiæ*[4], allowed full latitude in that character; so far as passion does not choke or discretion check his utterance he can say his say quite freely.

Caponsacchi's monologue is in the strongest contrast to Pompilia's. Hers is in one key throughout; her

[1] I. 1075.
[2] *O.Y.B.* lvii.-lx., *E.L.* 57-61.
[3] See *e.g. O.Y.B.* xx., cxlviii., *E.L.* 2[1], 152; cf. *e.g.* V. 1338-40.
[4] VI. 1636.

serenity is unbroken, she is at peace with God and with man. In his there is a constant conflict of emotions; we find in it both love and loathing, withering scorn and the tenderest pity, self-repression and the frankest self-revelation, resignation and the wildest protests against fate. Amidst all the wonderful variety of his speech certain passages fix themselves upon the memory. Such are those in which, with lively wit or mordant satire, he attacks the high ecclesiastics of his time, their opportunism, their irreligion, their sordid ambition, their frivolous dalliance, their scarcely less frivolous scholarship. Then again there are his fierce outbreaks upon Guido. In *Fifine at the Fair* Browning makes his Elvire's husband declare that 'to obtain the strong true product of a man' you must 'set him to hate[1]', and with that the poet, I think, agreed'[2]; his hero was none the less—perhaps he was all the more—a hero to him because his hatred was unmeasured. There was a moment, Caponsacchi says, when he might have killed his enemy:

> one quick spring,
> One great good satisfying gripe, and lo!
> There had he lain abolished with his lie,
> Creation purged o' the miscreate, man redeemed,
> A spittle wiped off from the face of God[3];

he would have killed him with the savage joy with which his 'Italian in England' would have

> grasped Metternich until
> I felt his red wet throat distil
> In blood thro' these two hands;

but he lost his opportunity, and with it his one chance of saving Pompilia's life. Now she lies dying, and in a Dantesque passage of astonishing power he pictures the awful doom, worse than the most shameful death, that he desires for her murderer[4]. But other passages, perhaps, are even more arresting: the brief accounts of the earlier appearances of Pompilia[5]; the description of the mental conflict which followed the speaker's first resolve; the concluding lines, in which the nobility of the thought is

[1] *Fifine at the Fair*, LXXIX.
[2] See Mrs. Orr, *Life*, pp. 370-71. Compare the passage about 'Dante, who loved well because he hated' in *One Word More*, V.
[3] VI. 1475-9; cf. 1894-6.
[4] VI. 1903-54.
[5] VI. 399, 411-12, 702-9, 1137-46.

echoed by the dignity of the verse; and, most of all, the long story of the flight. R. H. Hutton said of Browning that 'there is no narrative force in him at all'[1]—a strange judgment which the last-mentioned passage sufficiently refutes[2]. It shows the poet's complete 'mastery in narrative', but it is not narrative only; it is what Professor Dowden called it, 'record winged with lyrical enthusiasm'[3].

When *The Ring and the Book* was first published the objection was promptly raised that it is wanting in the 'grandeur' which in a poem of such length is 'a fundamental and indispensable element', and, more particularly, that its hero does nothing heroic; 'the action of Caponsacchi', it was said, 'is not much more than the lofty defiance of a conventionality, the contemplated penalty being only small. . . . There was no marching to the stake, no deliberate encountering of the mightier risks, no voluntary submission to a lifelong endurance'[4]. It may be added that Caponsacchi himself—the Caponsacchi of the Yellow Book—regarded the adventure as a commonplace (though an unpleasant and a mildly dangerous) duty; and even as we read the poem the comparison of the man to a soldier-saint, a slayer of dragons, a Saint George, though natural enough on Pompilia's lips, seems fairly to invite the smiling or sneering comments which Browning, who himself adopts it, puts into the mouths of Caponsacchi's critics[5]. His action is certainly 'noble and disinterested', and, though the Pope, who warmly approved it, regarded it as too theatrical in some of its incidents[6], he was perhaps in that respect somewhat too censorious. It *is* noble and disinterested, but it does not make Caponsacchi a Saint George. He is not the hero in action, but, as Browning created him, he has the 'grandeur' of a hero in capacity for action, in mind and in heart. Under the

[1] *Literary Essays*, p. 197. In the same essay (p. 230) there is an admirable appreciation of Caponsacchi's monologue, which the writer considered 'the finest effort of Mr. Browning's genius'.

[2] Browning's admirers will be provoked to cite this or that narrative poem in disproof of Hutton's dictum. The poet himself, in a letter to Mr. Gosse, 'selected *A Forgiveness* as a representative example of his narrative poetry'.

[3] Dowden, *Browning*, p. 267.

[4] I quote from an article by the Editor (John Morley) of *The Fortnightly Review* for March 1, 1869. The last instalment of the poem had been published in February.

[5] See note on III. 1065-6.

[6] X. 1128-37.

'felicitous annoy' of a new initiation his finely-tempered nature sweeps away all the frivolities and follies which have besmirched it; he lays aside every weight—

> the imprisonment
> O' the outside air, the inside weight o' the world [1]—

that has pulled him down; he becomes capable of far grander action than the particular call which comes to him demands.—And yet it is upon the acceptance or rejection of that call that his spiritual future depends. Readers of Browning know how firmly the poet believed that there comes to a man, perhaps once only in his life, a call which involves a no smaller issue. This 'doctrine of the great hour' appears, more or less impressively, in some of his shorter pieces, in *Youth and Art*, for instance, and in *Dis aliter visum*: it is adopted for the moment by the villain of *The Inn Album*; it startles all readers, and vexed some, when paradoxically presented in *The Statue and the Bust*. To Caponsacchi, as to others, came the hour for choice between 'the great refusal' and the great acceptance of the testing opportunity, and the monologue describes how under the spell of Pompilia's presence he at first accepted it; how in her absence 'duty to God' and 'duty to her' seemed to point to refusal; how when he was with her once again he accepted finally.—Mr. Chesterton has pointed out what, as he says, it is strange that previous critics had not noticed [2], that there is the closest correspondence between the problem which presented itself, as Browning conceived, to Caponsacchi and that which the poet was himself set to solve in his own great hour. He too had to choose between the chance of saving a life by a defiance of conventional (and normally sound) moralities and the sacrifice of the former by the observance of the latter. He chose as Caponsacchi chose, but with happier results; more truly than his hero *haud cunctando rem restituit* [3].

[1] VI. 949-51.

[2] Chesterton, *Browning*, pp. 107-10. The same suggestion is made, perhaps independently, in an Italian appreciation of the poem (F. Zampini-Salazar, *La Vita e le Opere di Roberto Browning ed Elisabetta Barrett-Browning*, p. 61).

[3] The words, which are precisely applicable to Browning and his marriage, are applied by Bottini to Caponsacchi and the flight in IX. 1000. But Caponsacchi did delay, and (through no fault of his own) he failed to save the situation.

A very special interest will be found to belong to Book VI.—and to Book VII.—when we compare the 'ring' with the 'book', the poem with its source. The two monologues are primarily based on the depositions made by the two speakers in the Process of Flight, but not only do they add very largely to those depositions, they are often inconsistent with them, just as the depositions are often inconsistent with one another. When Browning's Caponsacchi asked the judges in the murder-trial to turn to his deposition in the Process of Flight

and see
If, by one jot or tittle, I vary now[1],

the judges, if they had done what he asked, would have had to say that he varied very seriously; the story which he is made to tell in January 1698 both adds to, and on many crucial points varies from, the evidence which the real Caponsacchi gave in the previous May. I have noted the variations, and spoken of their significance, in Appendix V.; here I need say no more than that when a reader takes them, together with the additions, into account he will find that the essence and the self-consistency of the story as Browning tells it were provided, not by his Yellow Book, but by his imagination and his art.

For a characteristic example of the play of the poet's fancy upon his facts I may refer to his Caponsacchi's account of his earlier career. The Yellow Book tells us, on Pompilia's authority, that 'with other young men of the town he used to pass before the house [of Guido] and there stop to talk with certain *donnicciuole*'[2]. The American editor, who translates *donnicciuole* by 'hussies', thinks that Browning 'may have read into the word some of the opprobrium of our word *flirt* or even *chippy*'—I have no idea how much opprobrium this latter term connotes—, but he assures us that 'no such sinister meaning is necessarily implied'[3]; according to Hoare's *Italian Dictionary* a *donnicciuola* is nothing worse than a 'weak stupid woman'. Meanwhile, whatever may have been the precise meaning of the word on Pompilia's lips, the

[1] VI. 1644-5. [2] *O.Y.B.* lxxxiii., *E.L.* 91. [3] *O.Y.B.* 297.

sentence in which she used it became the foundation of an elaborate structure in the poem. Apart from his relations with Pompilia the records say little more of Caponsacchi than that he was a man of proved spirit and resolution, apt, in the opinion of an intimate friend, for a hazardous adventure. In the poem he had been 'a squire of dames' who flirted with countesses old and young, 'a fribble and coxcomb', an authority on fan-mounts and 'for delicate play at tarocs', 'a prince of sonneteers and lutanists', 'a spiritual Cupid'. All this adds greatly to the liveliness of the portrait and to the graver interest of the drama, but its only real foundation in the records is the allusion to the *donnicciuole*.—It appears from certain passages in the poem that Browning was inclined to interpret the equivocal Italian word *in pessimam partem*. His Canon Conti expected Caponsacchi to be attracted by 'Light-Skirts' at the theatre, and his Guido is represented as spreading reports, which he presumably expected Aretine society to find credible, that his enemy's steps 'inclined to a certain haunt of doubtful fame' which fronted the Franceschini palace [1].

Some readers of *The Ring and the Book* have considered that its story, like that of *Aurora Leigh* [2], was better suited to prose fiction than to poetry. Whether that is or is not so, the poet at any rate believed that the Yellow Book would provide a good plot for a novel, for he handed it over to a novelist-friend soon after he met with it [3]; and no less an authority than Mr. Henry James spoke of 'the sense, almost the pang, of the novel' suggested to him by his first reading of the poem on its first publication. In a brilliant appreciation which he gave long afterwards Mr. James declared that Caponsacchi—'the soul of man at its finest'—must in a novel be the centre. He would as novelist add certain episodes to the hero's career. He would 'turn Caponsacchi on earlier, ever so much earlier', place him at Rome in pre-Arezzo days, bring him into contact there with Guido in a relation which would make him 'a predestined agent' in the coming tragedy. And 'as the very end and splendid climax of all' he saw Capon-

[1] VI. 447–8; II. 806–7.

[2] Mrs. Browning herself spoke of *Aurora Leigh* as intended to be a 'novel-poem'.

[3] See Appendix I.

sacchi admitted alone to an audience in the Vatican; 'there', he said, 'is a scene if we will!'[1] The scene would in some of its incidents have recalled the impressive interview, so mysteriously stage-managed, between another Pope and another irregular servant of the Church in Fogazzaro's novel[2].

NOTES

7. *Six months ago.*] In May 1697, during the Process of Flight; more precisely 'eight months since', as in I. 1053, 1063.

8. *you same three.*] See note on I. 952.

12.] The line must be scanned thus :—

Laúghter | no lév | ity nóth | ing indéc | orous, lórds

(J. B. Mayor, *Chapters on English Metre*, p. 215). Anapæsts (⏑⏑–), of which there are three in this line, abound throughout the poem; Professor Mayor found 88 in the first 200 lines of Book IV., against an average of 30 in passages of the same length in Tennyson's blank verse.—For indecŏrous he quotes *Aristophanes' Apology*, line 135:

More decent, but indecorous enough.

This is a false quantity; when 'decorous' means 'beautiful' it comes from decŏrosus, and the o is short; when it means 'seemly' —'indecorous' in these passages means 'unseemly'—it comes from decōrus, and the o should be long.

19. *we are bound believe.*] Cf. 89 below, 'Was he bound brave the peril?'; *Fifine at the Fair*, LXVII., 'was bound acknowledge'.

31. *to lounge a little.*] Cf. II. 1181.

34. *Judge Tommati.*] See note on IV. 1308-16.

36. *was.*] A correction of the original 'is'.

49-59.] John xix. 23, 24; cf. X. 1526. We have here the Gospel story as embroidered by such painters as Teniers.

80. *and taught you*] by our evidence in the Process of Flight (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., lxxxix., *E.L.* 92, 96).

92. *I held so*], *i.e.* that he *was* bound to brave the peril.

122. *priest and trained.*] Gives a better rhythm than the original 'a priest trained'.

124. *her.*] Emphatic; the word is a great improvement on the unemphatic 'one' of the first edition.

134. *Chop-fallen.*] See note on XI. 788.

136.] There should be a note of exclamation after 'law', as in the first edition.

148. *the quenched flax.*] Isaiah xlii. 3; see below, 170-72.

[1] *Quarterly Review*, July 1912: 'The Novel in *The Ring and the Book*'.
[2] *Il Santo*, *c.* vii., § II.

156. *what's his style, the other potentate.*] 'Civility and the mode' personified; see note on II. 1473.

188. *as hide it.*] See note on IV. 1220.

207. *impertinently*], *i.e.* 'from the point' (219).

211-14.] Does Browning here follow some tradition which would explain 'to mock with' and the words which follow?

226. *wait!*] I think he means, till 1573 *seqq.*

228-35.] Cf. II. 1249-50:

> True Caponsacchi, of old Head-i'-the-Sack
> That fought at Fiesole ere Florence was.

The Florentines 'ruined Fiesole' in 1125, and Dante makes his ancestor Cacciaguida, who was killed in the second crusade (*Paradiso*, 15. 139-48), *i.e.* about 1148, say that in his time Caponsacco 'had already come down from Fiesole into the market-place', *i.e.* into the Mercato Vecchio of Florence (*Paradiso*, 16. 121-2). The Caponsacchi had been a distinguished family at Fiesole, and they became no less distinguished in their new home; they had their palace, with its tower no doubt (233), in this same Mercato Vecchio—now an ugly modern square, the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele.—A lady of the house married Folco Portinari and became the mother of Dante's Beatrice.

I do not understand the date which Caponsacchi gives so precisely in lines 234-5. He says that Fiesole was ruined and that his ancestors migrated to Florence 386 years before the year in which he is speaking (1698), that is to say in 1312. But the real date of the ruin of Fiesole was 1125, and that of the migration, if not 1125, must certainly, according to Dante, have been earlier than that of Cacciaguida's departure for the East in 1147. Is it possible that Browning, who must have had the passage from the *Paradiso* in mind, forgot for the moment that Dante was not speaking in his own person in that passage, but quoting his ancestor? The *Paradiso* was written approximately in (a little later than) 1312.

237-8. *a branch Are the Salviati of us.*] What was once the palace of the Salviati still exists; it stands at the corner of the Corso and the Via del Proconsolo.

242. *an illustration.*] This use of the word for a *person* who makes a name illustrious is common enough in French.

249-56.] 'The Granduke Ferdinand' of this passage is Ferdinand II. (1621–70); he was the son of Cosimo II. (1609-21), and the grandson of Ferdinand I. (1587-1609), the Grand Duke of *The Statue and the Bust.*

There is, I think, no statue of Cosimo II. at Arezzo, but there is one of Ferdinand I.; it stands in front of the Duomo. The 'father' of line 253 should perhaps be understood as 'grandfather'.

258. *bishop in the egg.*] In II. 788 Caponsacchi is spoken of as 'a bishop in the bud'.

280-89.] It is a Jewish and Mohammedan tradition that the true name of God is unknown to the uninitiated; 'Jehovah' is 'another set of sounds' substituted for it by a 'jumble' of 'consonants and vowels', and in reading 'Adonai' is used instead. The true name was engraved on Solomon's ring ('his holy ring Charactered over with the ineffable spell'—*Aurora Leigh*, p. 85); its use had a compelling force enabling Solomon to summon powers of heaven and earth to 'pile him a palace straight' (*Abt Vogler*), and obliging those who saw the charactery to speak truth (*Solomon and Balkis*).

282. *boggles at.*] 'To boggle' means 'to start aside, like a frightened horse'; *N.E.D.* connects the word with 'bogle', the spectre supposed to cause the fright. It occurs in *All's Well*, 5. 3. 232, 'you boggle shrewdly, every feather starts you', and is common in Browning. Bottini uses it twice (IX. 551, 1379); cf. *Ned Bratts*:—

> this and 't other lout, struck dumb at the sudden show
> Of red robes and white wigs, boggled nor answered "Boh!"—

and *Pietro of Abano*:—

> Grant me now the boon whereat before you boggled.

The present line, or rather the lines which it suggested to Calverley—

> It takes up about eighty thousand lines,
> A thing imagination boggles at—,

brought a rare word, with the help of the journalist, into every-day English.

317-18.] Philemon 10, 18-19.

319-20. *the right-hand with the signet-ring . . . to shake and use.*] Cf. 810-11 below, and XII. 551-2:

> Mouth as it made, eye as it evidenced,
> Despairing shriek, triumphant hate;

and *Cristina and Monaldeschi*:

> blessed and cursed
> Faith and falsehood—

i.e. blessed faith and cursed falsehood.

323. *letting Fénelon know the fool he is.*] Cf. XII. 65, and see Appendix VII. The passage suggests, perhaps wrongly, that Fénelon was deemed heretical before he published his *Maximes* in 1697.

333. *a Marinesque Adoniad.*] The Neapolitan Giovanni Battista Marino (1569–1625) was the fashionable poet of his time at Rome; he visited Paris and was in high favour there with Louis XIII. Referring to the *Adone*, his most famous poem—an epic more than twice as long as *The Ring and the Book*—, Milton, who calls its author *dulciloquus*, justly says, *canit Assyrios divûm* prolixus

amores (*Mansus*, 11). Marino's licentiousness and affectations—the euphuists of Italy became known as Marinisti—gave him a great vogue at a time of immorality and literary decline, but Caponsacchi, when his higher nature asserts itself, 'doubts much'

> if Marino really be
> A better bard than Dante after all
> (below, 457-8).

346. *the Pieve*] the Church of S. Maria della Pieve, of which Caponsacchi was a Canon.

349. *at tarocs.*] Cf. XII. 224. *Tarocchi* is 'a game of cards in which there were five sets or suits of ten cards each', played formerly in the selectest circles; the cards used were sometimes real works of art (see Ruskin's *Works*, Library Edition, xx. p. 335, note). The game engrosses the abundant leisure of the humbler folk of Fogazzaro's *Piccolo Mondo Antico*.

358-9. *grunts And snuffles*] with satisfaction at the flattery and contempt for other handlers of his subject—Molinism, no doubt.

362. *somebody*], the speaker.

379. *many an inch beyond the tonsure's need.*] See note on II. 787.

387-8. *chasms Permissible only to Catullus*], who, in the middle of the second line of an 'elegiac couplet', permits himself 'pauses' and 'chasms', *i.e.* leaves syllables unelided contrary to the rules of his metre; *e.g.* (I quote from Ellis's text):—

> 66. 48, Iuppiter, ut Chalybum | omne genus pereat.
> 67. 44, Speret nec linguam | esse nec auriculam.
> 68. 178, A quo sunt primo | omnia nata bona.
> 99. 8, Guttis abstersti | omnibus articulis.

389. *break Priscian's head.*] Priscian was a famous grammarian of the sixth century A.D.; 'to break Priscian's head' (*diminuere Prisciani caput*) became proverbial for 'to write or speak bad or unclassical Latin'. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, 5. 1. 31, the schoolmaster Holofernes says of a piece of baddish Latin that it is 'Priscian a little scratched'; cf. Pope, *Dunciad*, 3. 161-2:—

> Some free from rhyme or reason, rule or check,
> Break Priscian's head and Pegasus's neck:—

and Butler, *Hudibras*, 2. 3:—

> held no sin so deeply red
> As that of breaking Priscian's head.

Below (VIII. 166) the phrase is varied; Arcangeli expects that his rival will 'break Tully's [*i.e.* Cicero's] pate'.—After reading the unclassical Latin of the day's office Caponsacchi will find the classical Ovid a relief.

393-433.] See note on IV. 944 for the importance of this theatre-incident, which Pompilia also describes very fully (VII. 947-1030). The descriptions involve no idle repetition; Browning's ability to give variety to different tellings of the same story is as conspicuous here as elsewhere in the poem.

402. facchini], porters.

406. *the Rafael.*] There is no Raphael, I think, in the cathedral or elsewhere at Arezzo.

413. *cousin*] in the wider sense; Conti's brother had married Guido's sister (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiii., *E.L.* 91).

416. *Married three years since.*] As Browning supposed, in December 1693 (really in September; see Appendix III.). The poet assigns the theatre-incident to March 1697 (VII. 951); it was important for his purpose to represent it as occurring not long before the flight. The records leave it undated.

424. *The two old . . . family spectres.*] Pietro and Violante.

439. *I have louted low*], 'bowed to the ground', *i.e.* (here) abjectly apologized; the verb is used reflexively in IX. 13, 'Up comes an usher, louts him low'. It is common in English literature from Piers Plowman onwards; cf. *e.g.* Chaucer, *Monk's Tale*:—

> To which ymage, bothe yonge and oold
> Commanded he to loute;

and Spenser, *Faery Queene*, 1. 1. 30:

> He faire the knight saluted, louting low.

457-8.] See note on 333 above. Caponsacchi's doubt may be compared with the avowed heresy of his contemporary, Colonel Esmond, who 'put Shakespeare far beyond Mr. Congreve and Mr. Dryden' (*Esmond*, i. 3).

462. *lancet-windows.*] See note on 975 below.

463. *go eat.*] Cf. 'gone play' (472), 'go pray' (1882).

463. *the Archbishop's ortolans.*] Ortolans are a delicacy for epicures; in *Pippa Passes* (III. *ad fin.*) a poor girl regards it as a luxury, which she hopes rather than expects to enjoy, to have her polenta sliced 'with a knife that has cut up an ortolan'. In the prologue to *Ferishtah's Fancies* Browning makes an ingenious use of the Italian way of cooking these birds.

467. *canzonet.*] Like some one in *The Princess* Caponsacchi, according to Browning, had been 'a rogue of canzonets and serenades'.

472. *play truant in church.*] For a sly jest in the same vein see IX. 670-72.

479. *you say.*] See above, 369.

483-1151.] Caponsacchi's account here of his adventures with Pompilia is in many respects inconsistent with his deposition in the Process of Flight. See Introduction to Book VI. and Appendix V.

484. "*Summa*".] The *Summa Theologiæ* of Thomas Aquinas; see note on V. 1358.

489. *Leave*], *i.e.* how it may leave.

490. *to connect extremes*], *i.e.* to bridge over the 'gap 'twixt what is, what should be', to turn aspiration into achievement.

503. *There came*], *i.e. when* there came.

522.] Cf. 553-4, 608-9, VII. 1052-3.

539. *What fund of satisfaction, etc.*] Caponsacchi is represented as supposing that Guido was really jealous of him, and that he sent Maria with the forged letter in order to discover whether his jealousy was well-grounded or not. Had Caponsacchi 'kicked his messenger down stairs' he would have seen that it was not, and his heart would have been 'set at ease'.—The story of the love-letters which is given in Book VI. is wholly different from that of the real Caponsacchi; it is a masterly invention of the poet's.

559. *Thyrsis . . . Myrtilla.*] See note on IX. 541. These and other conventional names of pastoral lovers occur often in the love-letters produced during the Process of Flight.

582. *the thorn at her breast.*] A commonplace of poetry; the thorn at the nightingale's breast was invented, like the Philomela-Itys legend, to explain the supposed melancholy of the nightingale's song. It is, of course, really the male bird that sings.

588-9. *his bugbear . . . Canon Conti.*] Suggested by a passage in Pompilia's deposition, *O.Y.B.* lxxxiii.-iv., *E.L.* 91-92; see below, 639-40.

606. *hell's worm.*] Mark ix. 48.

639. *stalking-horse.*] Cf. VII. 1023.

653-4.] Pompilia deposed in the Process of Flight that at an interview with Caponsacchi she had begged him to avoid the street in which the palace stood, because his passing along it brought her into trouble with Guido; and that he had answered that Guido could not prevent his going along that street (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92).

668. *our church.*] The Duomo, not the Pieve; see above, 400.

685. *tempts, –thinks he.*] An improvement on the 'may,—he thinks' of the first edition.

704. *griefful.*] The *N.E.D.* quotes from Drummond of Hawthornden (1585–1649): 'to deliver her grief-ful body to the rest of a retired grave'.

707. *Our Lady of all the Sorrows.*] 'All the Sorrows' are the *Septem Dolores* of the B.V.M. which give their name to a holy day in the Roman Church. They are the Prophecy of Simeon (cf. Luke ii. 35, 'a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also'), the Flight into Egypt, the three days' loss of Jesus, the meeting with Him on the way to Calvary, the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross, the Entombment.

The *Mater Dolorosa* of art is sometimes represented with seven swords piercing her bosom or threatening her head (Mrs. Jameson, *Legends of the Madonna*, pp. 36-7).

725-880.] Pompilia's every word at this momentous interview has been burnt into Caponsacchi's memory; she herself reports what she said more briefly—'in some such sense as this, whatever the phrase' (VII. 1418-42).

747.] The word 'dare' is absent from between 'not' and 'abstain' in the first edition; its insertion shifts the accent from 'that' to 'strait', which is its proper place.

771. *at once*], *i.e.* all at once, as in 1224.

785.] The full stop (instead of a comma) at the end of this line in the illustrated edition is of course a mere misprint.

808-9.] 'My leaving Guido would mean that so far as he is concerned I should be as good as dead (*i.e.* he would be rid of me) without any sin on his part (he would not have killed me); more death than that (*i.e.* my actual death by his hand) he would have to answer for'. For Guido's 'own soul's sake', therefore, Pompilia entreats Caponsacchi to 'hinder', by helping her to leave him, 'the harm' her husband intends to do her (see above, 761-2).

811. *to pay and owe*], *i.e.* to pay death and owe life; see note on 319-20 above.

844-5. *The love . . . Of his brother.*] See note on II. 498-501.

862.] You become mixed up with the dream, and much of what the dream tells me of you is mere 'delusion' (874).—For 'gets to involve' see note on IV. 1541:—

> Men, plagued this fashion, get to explode this way.

873. *Though you have never uttered word yet.*] Cf. VII. 1444. But the assertion that Pompilia first had speech with Caponsacchi at this interview is flatly contradicted by her deposition; see note on 653-4 above and Appendix V.

898-9. *was found Your confidence in error.*] See above, 663-6.

909. *that first simile.*] Above, 671.

919. *my miracle, etc.*] That Pompilia had summoned him and signified her choice of him was a miracle that did not need proof outside itself; just as the miracle of 912-15 did not require as proof the story of the scorpion hatched in Madonna's mouth (910-11).

937-73.] See Dowden, *Browning*, p. 265, for some admirable remarks on this fine passage.

948.] 2 Corinthians v. 17; cf. Revelations xxi. 4, 5.

960-61.] Plato uses his reed-pen, as Thomas Aquinas uses his quill, to 'whisk off' the fly.—He is called 'sinner', in contrast to 'Saint' Thomas, because according to the orthodox creed he lived, like Euripides,

> Under conditions, nowise to escape,
> Whereby salvation was impossible,

and because his impulses and aspirations after truth and goodness were therefore 'without a warrant or an aim' (X. 1688-92).

961. *Cephisian reed*], *i.e.* from the river Cephissus which flows past Athens, not of course from the Bœotian Cephissus (as Berdoe explains).

966-7. *the initiatory pang . . . Felicitous annoy.*] See the note on the similar language which the Pope uses in the same connection in X. 1211.

968. *As when the virgin band, etc.*] Suggested partly by Revelations xiv. 4.

975. *the pillared front o' the Pieve.*] Illustrations of this pillared front are given in the 1898 edition of *The Ring and the Book* (facing p. 204) and in Treves (facing p. 88). Note the round arches of the three lower arcades. The Pieve dates from the early thirteenth century; the Duomo, with its lancet windows (above, 462), was begun in 1277.

977-8.] Revelations xxi. 9, 'the bride, the Lamb's wife'.

988. *his* corona], *i.e.* his beads.

1000. *scrannel voice.*] See note on I. 1201.

1002-9.] The 'hedge-fruit', the 'hips and haws', refer to the idle dalliance of 984 and 992: 'the seven-fold dragon' is the Church, which warns Caponsacchi off 'the thing of perfect gold', Pompilia. 'The fabled garden' is the garden of the Hesperides, the golden apples of which were watched by the dragon Ladon.

1010-13.] The duty of obedience, which had been 'struck into' Caponsacchi 'by the look o' the lady' (cf. 434 and 704), gave him its first call through the voice of the Church (1000-1), which he took for the authoritative voice of God (1013). The voice demanded from him an act of self-sacrifice; it bade him 'leave that live passion' and abandon the proposed adventure; he could not refuse its call to the obedience to which he was so newly pledged. Therefore, during the two days following upon his conversation with Pompilia, he took no steps towards fulfilling the promise he had made her to act at once (881-94).

That he in fact took no such steps appears from the depositions. Caponsacchi notes the delay, but does not explain it (*O. Y. B.* lxxxix., *E. L.* 96). Pompilia says that she complained that he had broken his promise; that he excused himself on the ground that he could find no carriage at Arezzo: that she rejoined that in that case he should have found one elsewhere (*O. Y. B.* lxxxv., *E. L.* 93). Like the rest of the romance, the story of the conflict in Caponsacchi's mind and heart between the claims of what seemed to be his duty towards God and those of a chivalrous and spiritual passion is Browning's 'fancy added to the fact'. Nowhere does the poet's imagination work more nobly.

1017. *bow the head*], *i.e.* to the Master; to do his duty to God was his truest duty to her (1030).

1022. *noon broadened.*] Cf. *A Dream of Fair Women*: 'Morn broadened on the borders of the dark'.

1030. *Duty to God is duty to her.*] Treves (p. 264) finds in these words an assertion 'that the saving of this fettered and unhappy woman was a devotional act'. The context shows that this is a misinterpretation.

1036-9.] With the punctuation given in the text 'I should sin' would be the apodosis to 'Could she but know' (which is certainly not intended), and the 'that' in 1037 would have nothing depending on it. The — in 1039 should be removed and the colon changed to a note of exclamation. Caponsacchi is meant to say: 'If only she could know that I should sin if by sinning I could procure some real good to her!'

1045. *he.*] Grammar requires 'him'.

1046.] With the indignant exclamation 'I fear the sword of Guido!' the sentence breaks off; there is no apodosis to the 'if'-clause which begins in 1042.

1059. *go minister.*] Cf. 1882, 'go pray'.

1078. *there's new moon this eve.*] Caponsacchi is supposed to be speaking on the evening of Sunday, April 21. In a letter to Lord Courtney of Penwith (see note on III. 1065-6) the poet wrote: 'In order to be quite sure of the age of the moon on the occasion of Pompilia's flight, I procured De Morgan's register of lunar risings for the last—I forget how many hundred years'. Treves (p. 168) says that 'by the use of the Metonic Cycle it appears that the day of the new moon was April 23rd'.

1080-84.] Cf. 1089-90. The passage is very puzzling. Pompilia, says Caponsacchi, is to 'take' (*i.e.* pass through) the San Clemente gate, for that is the only gate unguarded at night; and she is also to climb 'the low dilapidated wall' by the Torrione. But surely, if he meant her to climb the city-wall, he did not mean her to 'take' any gate, guarded or unguarded.

Referring to the records we find Caponsacchi deposing that he promised Pompilia to await her early in the morning at the San Clemente gate, that Pompilia came alone to that gate at 'about seven hours' (*i.e.* at about 1 A.M.), that they entered the carriage together at that gate, and drove round, outside the city-wall, to the San Spirito gate, 'which goes towards Perugia'; while Pompilia declared that she came downstairs at dawn, joined Caponsacchi there, went with him to the San Spirito gate, and found the carriage waiting outside it (*O.Y.B.* lxxxix., lxxxv., *E.L.* 96, 93). The two depositions, it will be observed, are at variance on many points, but they both imply that some gate was passed through by Pompilia, and neither of them speaks of her climbing the wall either by the Torrione or elsewhere.

A third account of the flight is given in the 'Sentence of the Criminal Court of Florence'. It states that the gates being closed

the fugitives climbed the wall by the Torrione, and that on arriving at the Cavallo Inn outside the San Clemente gate they found the carriage there (*O.Y.B.* v., *E.L.* 5).

The Sentence says nothing about the San Spirito gate, on which point we should probably supplement it from Caponsacchi's deposition; but the account it gives is free from the difficulty mentioned at the beginning of this note, and if supplemented as proposed it is clear, complete, and consistent with topography (for which see Treves, pp. 167-70). It is followed, with this supplement, in the story which Browning attributes to Guido's Aretine neighbours (V. 1020-29). The account which he attributes to Caponsacchi is an attempt to reconcile irreconcilables.

The San Clemente gate, with the adjacent great bastion called the Torrione, is at the extreme north of Arezzo. The San Spirito gate, to which the fugitives drove from the San Clemente, is at the south of the town; the Perugia road, by which they were to travel towards Rome, passes through it (1146-7).

1099-1103.] Legend, following the hint of John xx. 24, 25, says that St. Thomas was not present with the other disciples at the Assumption of the Virgin, and was sceptical about it; that to convince him of the fact she threw down her girdle to him. A citizen of Prato near Florence possessed himself, we are told, of this girdle at Jerusalem during the first crusade, and brought it home with him; the *sacratissima cintola della Madonna* is preserved in Prato Cathedral. The story of the girdle was often pictured by Italian artists, *e.g.* by Raphael in his 'Coronation', now in the Vatican.

1110-11.] For Browning's change of the date of the flight (which really occurred on April 29) and for his reason for changing it see note on III. 1065-6.

1116. *the octave.*] Easter Day in 1697 was April 14; its octave therefore included Sunday, April 21. The servant is supposed to be speaking on Monday, April 22.

1120. *laic dress.*] See note on II. 999.

1129.] See note on 1851-3 below.

1147-8.] The *vetturino* who drove the fugitives from Arezzo only took them the first stage (17 miles), viz. to Camoscia under Cortona (*O.Y.B.* vi., *E.L.* 5).

1161. *God's sea.*] Revelations xv. 2; 'the sea whose fire was mixt with glass In John's transcendent vision' (*Sordello*, I. 364-5).

1170. *who name Parian—coprolite.*] Coprolite is the petrified excrement (*κόπρος*) of carnivorous reptiles; beds containing it are worked as a source of artificial manure. Compare with this reference to it *George Bubb Dodington*, II. (in *Parleyings*):—

> No matter if the ore for which zeal delves
> Be gold or coprolite,

Ruskin (*Stones of Venice*, i. c. xxvi. § 5) 'thought it unnecessary to warn the reader that, while he might legitimately take the worm or reptile for a subject of imitation, he was not to study the worm cast or coprolite'.

1176-1417.] See Introduction to Book VI.—The route taken by the fugitives was that familiar to pre-railway travellers between Florence and Rome. After leaving Arezzo it passes Camoscia (below Cortona), the north end of Lake Trasimene, Perugia and Assisi (see note on 1203-5), Spello, Foligno (where it joins the Via Flaminia, the 'consular road' from Rimini to Rome), Spoleto, Terni, Civita Castellana. By this route the Brownings often travelled to and from Rome, not always without adventure (see *Letters of E. B. Browning*, ii. pp. 295-6, 298); the journey took five or six days. Of their visits to Rome, however, only one (that of the winter of 1860-61) took place after the finding of the Yellow Book [1], and the poet never crossed the Apennines again. Perhaps, like Caponsacchi (VI. 1208) and Pompilia (VII. 1531), he 'forgot the names' of places at which he imagined incidents to have occurred during the flight.

A full description of the road from Arezzo onwards, and of the towns and post-stations upon it, will be found in Treves (Part ii. c. iv.). Sir Frederick gives the precise distances from place to place and suggests a time-table for the fugitives' journey, but only now and then attempts to locate incidents unlocated by the poet.

1199. *the determined morning.*] Cf. IX. 243; contrast 'the doubtful morn', 1430 below. Perugia is 46 miles from Arezzo; the fugitives, according to Browning, must have gone somewhat more than that distance ('we have passed Perugia', 1203) by 'the determined morning'. Now they had left Arezzo (at the earliest) about 1 A.M., and Treves calculates that the average pace maintained during the flight, excluding stoppages, was about five miles an hour, or, including them, about three [2]. During the first part of the journey, the road being 'practically level', and the fugitives being anxious to get a good start, they perhaps went faster; but even so the morning must have been very fully 'determined' before they reached a point beyond Perugia. (In II. 978 the speaker estimates that the stage from Castelnuovo to Rome—about fifteen miles—is 'four-hours'-running'.)

1203-5.] They no doubt left both Perugia and Assisi (the 'holy ground' of St. Francis), as they had left Cortona, on their left

[1] Sir F. Treves says (p. 112) that 'apparently the last occasion on which the Brownings resided in Rome was in the winter of 1859' (*i.e.* before the Yellow Book was found), and he implies (p. 172) that it was only in 1854 that they went there by the Perugia route. Mrs. Browning's letters show that he is mistaken on both points.

[2] Much the same as that of English coaches at about the same date (Macaulay, *History*, c. iii.).

hand; to go up and down the hills upon which these towns stand would have been a waste of time.

1214. *This was—I know not where.*] Possibly where the road crosses the Chiaggio; or perhaps somewhat further on. The 'great hill' may be Monte Subasio, familiar to visitors to Assisi.

1226-7.] 'This good which I feel may be the good for which that pain was; if it is not, I fear that the hope of cure is gone'.

1234. *I did not like that word.*] For it implied that she was no more to him that any other woman whom he might help. See below, 1274, 1319, 1382-3.

1235-45.] The passage suggests the influence of the poet's wife; see Introduction to Book VII. Lines 1242-5 in particular might come straight from *Aurora Leigh*.

1246. *the blow-ball.*] The flower of the dandelion.

1254.] The bishop's villa must be near Spello.

1262-5.] Caponsacchi has learnt how hollow the ecclesiasticism of the time is; 'he'll no more' of it; doesn't the Bishop see, as he sees, that it is out of date?—For the rochet see 1878 below.

1267. *I can neither read nor write.*] See Appendix IV.

1271. *Gabriel's song.*] An adaptation, I suppose, of the words of the Annunciation.—The Sapphic hymn appointed in the breviary for the feast of St. Gabriel the Archangel (April 18) is not more concerned with Gabriel than with Michael and Raphael.

1273. *proper to us travellers.*] Raphael was, in Milton's words (*Paradise Lost*, v. 221-2),

> the sociable spirit, that deign'd
> To travel with Tobias;

See the book of Tobit, *passim*. The breviary contains the following prayer for the feast of St. Raphael the Archangel:—

> Deus, qui beatum Raphaelem Archangelum Tobiæ famulo tuo comitem dedisti in via: concede nobis famulis tuis; ut ejusdem semper protegamur custodia, et muniamur auxilio.

1274. *I did not like that, neither.*] Because she spoke of him as a priest; see 1382-3.

1275.] 'In the determined morning' they were somewhere between Perugia and Assisi (1199, 1203). Foligno is about 21 miles from the former and 10 from the latter; if, therefore, they reached Perugia, as Treves suggests, about noon, and if when they reached Foligno it was dark, they must have made this part of the journey very leisurely.

1277-9.] The distance by road from Foligno to Rome is about 88 miles; the driver calculates that, with good luck, they will cover it in 24 hours including stoppages.

1291. *We did go on all night.*] It appears from the records that Guido declared 'in his confession' that he had ascertained

that the fugitives 'slept together at Foligno in the *osteria* of the posthouse' (*O.Y.B.* cxxvii., *E.L.* 135). Treves maintains, perhaps too confidently, that the time of their arrival at Castelnuovo (at sunset the next day) proves that 'any but the briefest halt at any place on the journey' was quite 'impossible' (p. 205). Foligno is about 72 miles from Castelnuovo.

1302-3.] Psalm lxviii. 1. Mr. R. E. Prothero (*The Psalms in Human Life*, p. 31) makes the interesting suggestion that Browning's use of the quotation may be 'an echo of St. Antony', who, when sorely beset by the temptations of the world and the flesh in the forms of fiends, drove them off by chanting Psalm lxviii. So, he suggests, Caponsacchi, hearing Pompilia moan in her fevered dreams, and seeing her, as he imagined, wave away an evil spirit that assailed her, cried 'Let God arise, etc.'.

1311-12.] Cf. VII. 1564-5.

1320-40.] Pompilia also mentions the incident (VII. 1555-9). 'I think', says Treves (p. 191), 'this must have happened at Torricella', but Torricella is at a much earlier stage in the journey, N.E. of Lake Trasimene; it was passed early on the first morning of the flight.

1347. *my own church.*] Cf. VII. 20.

1374. *or else from, etc.*] The cause here mentioned has been already suggested in 1372 ('unborn').

1375. *Such as is put into a tree.*] Cf. X. 1073-81, where the Pope speaks of plants and animals as being

> all in a common pact
> To worthily defend the trust of trusts,
> Life from the Ever Living.

It is a breach of the common pact that brings swift retribution on the mother in *Ivàn Ivànovitch.*

1389. *whose name?*] Gaetano was the name designed by Pompilia for her unborn child, 'for a reason' (VII. 30) given in VII. 101-7.

[1396. *Whom the winds carry.*] Psalm xviii. 10.

1398. *The old tower, etc.*] Treves, who gives (pp. 217-30) an interesting account of Castelnuovo, shows that Browning's descriptions of the place here and in I. 508-9 are 'singularly inapplicable'. The post-house where the fugitives passed the night and the prison in which they were afterwards lodged may still be seen.

1405. *Setting.*] On the important discrepancy between Caponsacchi's and Pompilia's statements about the time of the arrival at Castelnuovo see the note on VII. 1580-84 and Appendix V.

1414-16.] It appears from the records that the host made a deposition and was cross-examined (*O.Y.B.* cxlv., ccxiv., *E.L.* 149, 216) about the circumstances of the night at Castelnuovo, but it is not there stated that he pressed the fugitives to stay.

1427-9.] All this (cf. II. 975-7, III. 1196-1202, V. 1052-62) is based on statements in the *O.Y.B.* (clxxxi., ccxxi., *E.L.* 187, 222), but it is contradicted by Caponsacchi in his deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxix., *E.L.* 97). See Appendix V.

1444. *an April day.*] According to Browning the day was Wednesday, April 25; it was in fact Tuesday, May 1.

1455-6.] See note on 1291 above.

1459. *Vulcan pursuing Mars.*] This story from the *Odyssey* is also introduced in III. 1450-55 and in IX. 868-77 (where see note).

1461. *not without my Cyclops.*] The Cyclopes of the Odyssey were lawless Sicilian shepherds; later accounts made them servants of Vulcan, forgers of thunderbolts (*e.g.* Euripides, *Alc.* 5).

1487. *Molière's self.*] When Molière died in 1673 his fame was already firmly established in Italy as in England.

1518-20.] Note the insistence on 'the blood-red day-break'; cf. 1525, 1545, 1602, and see note on 1405.

1528. *Away from between me and hell!*] 'Between me and *hell*' comes as a surprise; contrast with it the language attributed to Pompilia when referring to the same occasion in III. 1154-6:

> Count Guido once more between *heaven* and me,
> For there my heaven stood, my salvation, yes—
> That Caponsacchi all my heaven of help.

(Cf. III. 1344-7 and VII. 1595, where she speaks of her husband, again on the same occasion, as 'that ice-block 'twixt the sun and me'.) Even in the present context Caponsacchi calls Guido

> the opprobrious blur
> Against all peace and joy and light and life.

—Violently aroused at sunrise from a deep sleep on 'a strange bed', distracted by all she sees in what she is elsewhere represented as describing as 'a strange room like hell, roaring with noise, ruddy with flame' (III. 1151-2), Pompilia for one bewildered moment identifies the 'light like blood' which fills the window (line 1520) with the fires of hell. Before that window, between her and those fires, stands 'the black figure' of Guido, whose abhorred embracing seems to her a far worse fate than the 'hell' which his figure intercepts; she can accept hell as heaven's 'just award' rather than bear 'love-making devils'.—She is indeed at a point of anguish where heaven and hell are as one; remove the 'devils', and she can plunge into the purity of hell's flames and find God there.

The blood-red sunrise of that terrible morning brought with it the calamity portended the evening before by

> the sudden bloody splendour poured
> *Cursewise* in day's departure by the sun
> (I. 511-12).

1544. *the sword that hung beside him.*] See note on II. 1031.

1558-9.] For the 'amorous pieces' see Appendix IV. On 'verse and prose' cf. 1660 below and V. 1140, II. 1075; both the communications produced by Guido's lawyers as written by Caponsacchi (*O.Y.B.* xcviii., *E.L.* 105-6) are in prose, but there are allusions in the correspondence to amorous pieces in verse. On Guido's expectation of finding what he professed to find at the inn (or in the prison) at Castelnuovo see 1668-73 below. Can it be believed that the alleged correspondents would both have carried about with them, and been so careless with, these incriminating documents?

1560-63.] Contrast II. 1043-8 and IX. 929-42, where Pompilia's resolute defiance is represented as having caused a general revulsion of feeling in her favour.

1573-4.] Cf. 223-6 above, and see note on V. 143.

1578. *for reasons good.*] The reasons alleged by Bottini in defence of Caponsacchi's 'laic garb' are given in the note to II. 999.

1600. *fulgurant.*] Elsewhere Browning applies the epithet only to Jupiter, its rightful owner; see *Sordello*, v. 44:—

> Careful, Jove's face be duly fulgurant;

and *Imperante Augusto Natus Est*:—

> yon gold shape
> Crowned, sceptred, on the temple opposite—
> Fulgurant Jupiter.

Cf. Cicero, *Div.* 2. 18. 43: *Iove tonante, fulgurante, comitia populi habere nefas.*

1611. *Far beyond "friend".*] He was glad that she had called him 'my friend' (1383), but she had since spoken of him as her 'guardian and saviour' (1542).

1625-7.] See VIII. 366-80, note.

1636. *As friend of the Court.*] See Introduction to Book VI.

1645. *by one jot or tittle.*] See Introduction to Book VI. and Appendix V.

1657. *when*], *i.e.* if, and only if; cf. 1666. For Pasquin see note on XII. 141; the pasquinade here mentioned is, I think, imaginary.

1662-5.] During the Process of Flight Caponsacchi was shown two love-letters which had been offered as evidence against him. Having examined them both he said of one of them, 'It was not written by me, though the handwriting has some resemblance to mine'; and of the other, 'It was most certainly not written by me, the handwriting is not mine, and has indeed no resemblance to mine whatever' (*O.Y.B.* xc., *E.L.* 98).

1666. *Bembo's verse!*] 'You might as well say it is Bembo's while you are about it; why, it is such stuff as any scholar and gentleman would scorn to write'.—Pietro Bembo (1470-1547) was

secretary to Caterina Cornaro, ex-queen of Cyprus (the 'Kate the Queen' of the song in *Pippa Passes*), at Asolo; he was afterwards Cardinal and secretary to Leo X. There is an allusion to him, as the supposed coiner of the verb *asolare*, in the Dedication of the *Asolando* volume. Bembo was a great scholar, a 'thorough purist' (as Browning calls him) in language, and an elegant writer both of prose and verse; 'all Italy', says Burckhardt (*Renaissance in Italy*, p. 267), 'learnt by heart' many of his epigrams.

1667. *The tract* 'De Tribus'], *i.e.* the *De Tribus Impostoribus* (viz. Moses, Christ, Mohammed), a tract of uncertain date ascribed to a certain Ochinus, whom Sir Thomas Browne described (*Religio Medici*, i. § 20) as 'that Villaine and Secretary of Hell'.

1691.] *O.Y.B.* lxxiv. (*E.L.* 81): *patitur relevantissimam exceptionem publici meretricii, et tanquam unica* (*i.e.* unsupported) *nihil probat.* Cf. *O.Y.B.* cclii., *E.L.* 249.

It is sometimes difficult to scan the Latin which Browning takes from his documents and prints as verse, but there is no such difficulty here; the line has a double (or 'feminine') ending (*sub im | putá | tió | ne mér | etrí | cis*). When Latin is quoted such endings are common (cf. IV. 1577, IX. 523, 524, etc.), otherwise they are rare, in *The Ring and the Book*.—Double endings, as every one knows, occur more often in Shakespeare's later than in his earlier work; thus there are said to be 33 per cent. of them in *The Tempest*, but only 4 per cent. in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Exactly the opposite is the case with Browning's blank verse. I found 18 double endings in 100 lines of the early *Paracelsus* (1835) and 14 in 100 lines of *Pippa Passes* (1845); these percentages, however, are much above the average percentage in those two poems. I have also taken at random 100 lines of each of four of the poet's later blank-verse poems *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau* (1871), *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country* (1873), *The Inn Album* (1875), *Ferishtah's Fancies* (1884)—and have found in them no double endings at all.—In the poet's translation of the *Agamemnon* (1877) the dialogue is given in blank verse with double endings only.

1695. *O' the first night.*] See note on 1147-8 above.

1697. *frenetic*], *i.e.* mad, passionate; a favourite word of Carlyle's. In *Fifine at the Fair*, v., 'frenetic to be free' = passionately desiring freedom. 'Frantic' is the same word.

1697-1704.] Cf. IX. 686-93. The evidence of Borsi was much discussed, and effectively riddled by the prosecution, in the murder-trial; but the point here made against it was first raised after Guido's execution, when in the proceedings taken to clear the reputation of Pompilia Lamparelli suggested that Borsi might have been compelled to depose to the kissings 'by the tedium of his secret prison' (*O.Y.B.* cclii., *E.L.* 249).

A criminal charge was brought against him before 'the Commissary of Arezzo,' probably soon after the flight, for having helped

the fugitives; on his return to Arezzo after driving them one stage (to Camoscia) he was perhaps arrested immediately, *i.e.* at the end of April or the beginning of May. We are not told when the Commissary acquitted him, but the acquittal was not confirmed till December 24 (*O.Y.B.* viii., *E.L.* 7). He may therefore have suffered 'some weeks' or some months 'of sharp imprisonment' (cf. IX. 689, 'after long rotting in imprisonment'), and in view of the partiality shown towards Guido by the Arezzo authorities he may have thought it well to let 'his obduracy melt' and to make such a confession as Guido desired.

1714-15], *i.e.* (but had) played discreetly, (had neither) ruffled gown nor ripped the cloth.

1729, 1732.] Genesis xxxix.

1742. *The pettiness o' the forfeiture.*] Cf. 30 above: 'the jocular piece of punishment'.

1747. 'De Raptu Helenæ'.] A Greek hexameter poem (Ἑλένης ἁρπαγή) by Coluthus of Lycopolis in Egypt (*c.* 500 A.D.); a bad imitation of Homer. A MS. of this 'Rape of Helen', the only surviving piece of its author, was found in Calabria by Cardinal Bessarion (1389–1472), whose collection of MSS. formed the nucleus of the library of St. Mark's at Venice. Among the treasures of the French sculptor in *Pippa Passes* is a *De Raptu Helenæ*—

> This minion, a Coluthus, writ in red
> Bistre and azure by Bessarion's scribe.

1751. *Scazons.*] A Scazon (σκάζων, 'limping') is an iambic line of six feet, the last of which is a spondee or trochee (— — — or — ⏑), and not an iambus as in the ordinary iambic line. Catullus and Martial both wrote poems in scazons, of which the following are typical lines:—

> Vale, puella. Iam Catullus ob | dūrat.
> Apollinarem conveni meum, | scāzon.

Some scazons from the *Prologue* of Persius are quoted in the note to IX. 453-6. Contrast the ordinary iambic line:—

> Phaselus ille, quem videtis, hos | pĭtes.

Caponsacchi is advised to make the Cardinal his friend for life by sending him a copy of scazons in one line of which he has put (as though by inadvertence) an iambus in the last foot for the Cardinal's acumen to detect.

1757. *these*], *i.e.* of course, 'the religion and justice here'. It is strange that Dr. Berdoe should have thought that 'these' meant 'verse': he supposed, apparently, that Caponsacchi took his friends' advice and travestied *De Raptu Helenæ* at Civita!

1767.] Luke vi. 38.

1771. *would personate Saint George.*] See note on III. 1065-6.

1775-8] 'was', 'was', 'should', 'might', must be emphasized.

1780. *were law and gospel.*] Browning gets rid of the anapæsts ('were the law and the gos[pel]') which gave a less good emphasis in the first edition.

1792. *cartulary*], *i.e.* register.

1819. *daring try be good.*] Note the twice-repeated omission of 'to' before infinitive; for the omission after 'try' cf. VII. 880.

1820-21.] For the 'Prince o' the Power of the Air' see note on I. 567. The meaning of 'the Lord of Show' is clear enough; I don't know whether Browning coined or borrowed the phrase.

1824-5.] Vocatives.

1831. *failure or success*], *i.e.* whether the flight failed or succeeded.

1836. *we who led the days, etc.*] according to the discredited Margherita (above, 1674 *seqq.*).

1838-9.] This argument in the fugitives' favour is used both by Bottini (*O.Y.B.* lxxii., *E.L.* 79), by the author of the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccxx., *E.L.* 221), and by Lamparelli (*O.Y.B.* ccxlix., *E.L.* 246). Cf. III. 1128-30.

1842. *we made aware of us*] by our prompt appeal at Castelnuovo to the Roman Court (above, 1575-83). See note on II. 1018.

1851-3.] Cf. 1129, 'Use and wont recognized the excepted man'. The need for deceit and evasion in exceptional circumstances may be paramount; but it 'ought never to come to a man twice. If he finds that necessity twice, he may, I think, be looked at with the beginning of a suspicion' (Chesterton, *Browning*, p. 108).

1855. *dealing so ambiguously as gave.*] Ungrammatical; Browning should have written either 'ambiguous' or 'as to give'.

1877. *the world's musk.*] Cf. I. 929, II. 825.

1878. *the rochet.*] A short tight-sleeved surplice, 'the proper vestment of bishops, prelates, and canons'.

1879-80.] 'These good things' don't ring true.

1884. *Did not I say . . .?*] See 204 *seqq.*

1890. *as I said*] in 1473 *seqq.*

1905. *Not death, etc.*] Contrast the Pope, X. 2117 *seqq.*

1917. *to cramp him*], *i.e.* to give him a secure hold-by, as with a cramp-iron.

1928-54.] The passage is surely suggested by the *Inferno*, but a critic in *The Edinburgh Review* (July 1869, p. 184) said of it that it 'is eminently French in character, and certainly suggests, if it was not suggested by, the manner of M. Hugo'.

1932. *Whom is it, straining onward still, he meets?*] Originally Browning wrote, 'Lo, what is this he meets, strains onward still?', the last words of which misrepresent his meaning.

1934. *prize*], the French *prise.*

1940. *mops and mows*], *i.e.* grimaces; see note on I. 572.

1945. *smatch*], *i.e.* smack, flavour.

1950. *cockatrice . . . basilisk.*] The two names 'are used

interchangeably by Shakespeare' (*Shakespeare's England*, i. p. 519; cf. p. 496). Cf. Bartholomew Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, p. 144, ed. Steele: 'The cockatrice hight Basiliscus in Greek'.

1959. *the lady's mind*], *i.e.* her good judgment in taking such a man as myself for her helper.

1975.] See 1321 *seqq.*

1990. *Painters would say, etc.*] But Carlo Maratta, the then famous painter, is made to say (III. 63) that 'A lovelier face is not in Rome'.

1998. *just to disfigure.*] See note on VIII. 1221-5.

2001. *in a clown's disguise.*] See note on V. 1565.

2006. *For what and by whom?*] If it had not been for accidents, which forced Guido to confess his guilt, his lawyers could have invented a plausible tale, representing Caponsacchi as the murderer. See VIII. 361-81, and cf. XI. 1707-24.

—. *It is too palpable*] that vindication of his honour was not his real motive.

2007-22.] The *Decretum Relegationis*, dated September 24, 1697, which sent Caponsacchi to Civita Vecchia, was drawn up in these terms:—

> Joseph. Maria Caponsacchius de Aretio pro complicitate in fuga, & deuiatione Franciscæ Comparinæ, & cognitione carnali eiusdem relegatus per triennium in Ciuitate Vetula (*O.Y.B.* xcix., *E.L.* 106).

At the instance of Lamparelli, Procurator of the Poor, who defended the fugitives in the Process of Flight, the judges afterwards substituted for *pro complicitate—eiusdem* the words *pro causa de qua in actis* (or *in Processu*), *i.e.* for the reason with which the proceedings were concerned. So far both sides agreed; see *e.g. O.Y.B.* clxvii., *E.L.* 175 (Bottini), and *O.Y.B.* cxxvi., *E.L.* 134 (Spreti).

The question, however, what, if any, was the significance of the substitution, was hotly disputed during the murder-trial. Guido's lawyers contended that it had practically no significance, that it was merely made 'by way of indulgence to the still-asserted honour of the woman and to the dignity of the Canon'; they denied that the judges meant to make any real correction, such as the insertion, which appears to be suggested by the other side, of the word *prætensa* ('alleged') before *cognitione carnali* (*O.Y.B.* cxii., cxxvi., *E.L.* 120, 134). The prosecution rejoined (1) that the original wording of the decree was a blunder, 'a penman's error' (below, 2019), 'not in agreement with the proofs'; that it stated the grounds on which the *charge* was based, not the reasons for the *sentence* (cf. IX. 1527-9), and that it was corrected accordingly; (2) that the use of *causa* (not *causis*) in the amended form of the decree proved that Caponsacchi was relegated for one reason only, which, it is urged, was his complicity in the flight; (3) that, f the graver charge against him had been regarded as established,

he would have been punished far more severely (*O.Y.B.* clxvii., ccxxi., *E.L.* 175, 223).

2009-10. *title O' the sentence.*] The word 'title' (*titulus*) means the reasons stated in the decree. See IX. 1527-61.

2013. Probationis ob defectum.] Gambi asserts (*O.Y.B.* lxii., *E.L.* 66) that 'it was resolved, *because of defect of proof* of adultery, that the Canon should be relegated to Civita'.

2016. *to amuse The adversary.*] Suggested by the Second Anonymous Pamphlet, which says (*O.Y.B.* ccxv.-vi., *E.L.* 217) that the judges, 'nauseated by the importunity' of the Francheschini brothers, sent Caponsacchi to Civita 'to give them some satisfaction in their pressing solicitations rather than because of the claims of justice'.

2024-5. *Not what I wish true. . . . It is not true.*] He professes not to believe, because he wishes not to believe, that she applied to Conti and Guillichini before applying to him; he would rather that she should have turned to him first.—Pompilia made different but not necessarily inconsistent statements about her action in this matter. She said in her deposition: 'Not knowing to whom to have recourse to put this wish of mine [*i.e.* her wish to flee to Rome] into execution, and thinking that either from relationship or from friendship to my husband no one in the place would help me, I resolved in the end to speak of it to Caponsacchi, because I heard it said that he was a man of resolution' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92-3). She wrote, a few days earlier, to Pietro: 'I am imprisoned here at Castelnuovo for having fled with a gentleman whom you don't know, but he is related to the Belichini [a slip of the unpractised penwoman or of the printer for Guillichini; the name is printed Quilichini in another place, *O.Y.B.* lxxi.] who was at Rome; I was to have come with him, but owing to illness he could not come. This other gentleman however came, and I came with him because my life was not worth an hour's purchase' (*O.Y.B.* clv., *E.L.* 160; cf. IX. 477, and see Appendix IV.). It will be noticed that she mentions Conti in neither place, but both in the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccxvii., *E.L.* 219) and in the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 210-211, *E.L.* 261-2) he is said to have been 'the mediator of the flight'.

2032. *dead, poisoned a month ago.*] The authority for this is the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*loc. cit.*): 'it being public talk and rumour that he died about a month ago under a similar suspicion [of poison]'.

2036. *had come*], *i.e.* would have come; Conti did not, apparently, give evidence in the Process of Flight.

2037-8. *condemned . . . To the galleys*] at Portoferraio in Elba. See *O.Y.B.* vii., *E.L.* 7.

2040. *A fortnight since.*] The Governor's sentence was finally confirmed by the Florence Court on December 24, 1697, just a fortnight before the date assigned to Caponsacchi's speech.

2043. *two tales to suit the separate courts.*] See Guido's remarks on this point, V. 1906-8.

2054.] A relative clause.

2061. *the letter*], *i.e.* apparently, the attestation given in *O.Y.B.* lvii.-lviii., *E.L.* 57-8. This attestation, however, is dated January 10, some days after the supposed date of the speech.

2077.] Cf. VII. 1841-3 (Pompilia) :—

> So, let him wait God's instant men call years ;
> Meanwhile, hold hard by truth and his great soul,
> Do out the duty !

and X. 1210-12 (The Pope).

2099-2100.] Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, the aim of which is hortatory rather than purely biographical, are in sets of two ; in each set a Roman and a ' Grecian ' are put side by side.

2104. *from such communion*], that of the ' imagined life ' of line 2081. But for all his resolution Caponsacchi cannot ' pass content ' from the imagined life with Pompilia to the real life without her.

BOOK VII.—POMPILIA

INTRODUCTION

We are told on high authority that when Book VII. was first published (in January 1869) people who on the appearance of earlier portions of the poem had taken exception to the sordid character of Browning's story became convinced that 'the subject was not, after all, so incurably unlovely', but that, nevertheless, there was 'a comparative disappointment' at the presentation of Pompilia[1]. If there was any such disappointment—I know of no other evidence of it—it soon passed away. A succession of most felicitous eulogies[2] of the poet's conception and of the verse in which he embodied it has 'vindicated the fame' both of heroine and of poet; no other part of the poem has won so enthusiastic and so unqualified an admiration from the critics, and their judgment has been accepted by all readers, critical and uncritical, now for a full half century. In its general tenour it stands unchallenged, and it would be worse than superfluous to repeat in feebler words what has been said so often and so well; but on one or two particular points a few observations may be offered.

Browning, as every one knows, has been charged with the 'defect in his dramatic art' that the people whose thoughts he professes to express in their own way 'use Browning's speech and think his thought'. Professor Walker, for instance, tells us that 'simple child as Pompilia is, there is a depth of philosophy in her utterances that

[1] Mr. John Morley in the *Fortnightly Review*, March 1, 1869, pp. 331, 342.

[2] None of them, perhaps, is more felicitous than that of Mr. Stopford Brooke in his *Browning*, pp. 359-64, 371, 408-10.

is not in strict keeping with her character'; and that 'she, like all Browning's men and women, uses the abrupt vivid language of the poet'[1]. On the former point I shall speak in a moment; what are we to say about the latter? Is it true that, to quote another exponent of the same opinion, 'the child-wife Pompilia tells her story in much the same language as her elderly and wicked husband, Count Guido, and the young Canon Caponsacchi; and all talk a good deal more like Robert Browning than any other human creature before or since'[2]? No doubt a student of Browning's style and manner will find their presence in the utterances of all his characters in *The Ring and the Book*, just as a student of Shakespeare will find evidence of Shakespeare's style in the utterances of all the characters 'in, let us say, *The Tempest*'[3]. Pompilia, like Guido, Caponsacchi, and the rest, 'docks the smaller parts-o'-speech', practises economy in the use of articles and of relative pronouns, omits a 'to' before her infinitives; in these and other ways she speaks Browning's speech. But then Browning himself speaks in so many profoundly different ways, adapts his diction, his manner, his rhythm with such wonderful flexibility to the sorts and conditions of his *personae*, to the thoughts and passions which he makes them express! In the childlike Pompilia he created a character unusual in his poetry and the style of her monologue is therefore unusual; its simple diction with its girlish colloquialisms, its limpid and pellucid flow, may make it seem at times that (in the words of M. Berger) *ce ne soit plus Browning qui écrive avec une telle simplicité claire et douce . . . Ici plus de recherche d'effet, plus de complication de pensée, plus de rhétorique même sincère, rien que des paroles simples, presque naïves d'une enfant à l'âme pure*[4].

With the simplicity of language, manner, and rhythm there is combined in Book VII., as M. Berger notes, a simplicity of thought. Pompilia lies upon her death-bed, pierced with 'twenty-two dagger-wounds, five deadly', and her survival is a marvel; she speaks, naturally enough,

[1] *The Age of Tennyson*, p. 230.
[2] From Mr. Frederick Ryland's *Selections from Browning*, p. xvii.
[3] Symons, *Introduction to Browning*, p. 20.
[4] Pierre Berger, *Browning*, p. 210.

'with a little disorder at first', giving utterance to her reflexions 'as they come'. But she does not suffer 'too much pain'; the disorder disappears as she tells with artless charm of this or that incident of her girlhood, and hints as she proceeds at the horrors of her later years, half-forgetting them at times or putting them aside. Her mind and soul are at peace: she holds fast to her faith in God; she rejoices in God's gift to her of a son; she remembers affectionately such affection as it has been granted her to know; she can forgive or finds excuses—poor excuses but sincere—for the malignant hatred which has mangled her body and would have ruined her soul; and all her strength returns to her as she vindicates the purity and reverently recalls the devotion of her 'soldier saint' whom she will meet again in heaven. For the rest, she 'endeavours to explain her life'[1], but it has been a tangle which she cannot unravel; of one of its perplexities she can only say,

> Think it out, you who have the time![2]

—*Elle ne comprend pas, mais se résigne*; she feels that she is but an ignorant child. As the Pope, when recording her purity, her patience, her faith, her return of right for wrong, of 'most pardon for most injury', says of her:

> It was not given to Pompilia to know much,
> Speak much, to write a book, to move mankind,
> Be memorized by who records my time[3].

It is of this unsophisticated spirit (who has, however, been memorized and has profoundly moved so much of mankind as has read her story) that we are told that she had a philosophy and that it was Browning's. A philosophy, whether Browning's or another's? When she says in her simple way,

> The saints must bear with me, impute the fault
> To a soul i' the bud, so starved by ignorance,
> Stinted of warmth, it will not blow this year[4],

a professor of Moral Philosophy finds in the lines a valuable corrective of the 'sceptical philosophy' which was destined

[1] So Browning summarizes her monologue in I. 1104.
[2] VII. 709. [3] X. 1020-2. [4] VII. 1515-17.

to 'come down like a blight' upon the poet[1], but surely they have no philosophical import whatever; the *flair* of the professor leads him astray. Or again, when she lies serene in her last hours, when she says of herself,

> Being right now, I am happy and *colour things*[2],

and speaks of God as

> ever mindful in all strife and strait . . .
> Till at the last he puts forth might and saves[3],

her words are used as that famous lyric is used in which Pippa, cheered by the brilliant sunrise of her new-year's holiday, sees everything *couleur de rose*—

> Morning's at seven;
> The hill-side's dew-pearled; . . .
> God's in his heaven—
> All's right with the world!

—the two children are quoted as if they stated a reasoned conclusion in support of Browning's optimistic theory[4]. They both, I imagine, say precisely what any poet, optimistic or otherwise, would have made them say if only he could have made them say it so finely; given their characters and their circumstances, their utterances are in any case entirely right. Out of their mouths is perfected praise and not philosophy[5].—From the philosophical standpoint Pompilia, for all her experience, is still a child; from other points of view she is indeed more, but half her charm is her childlike charm; and instead of endowing her with a philosophy we shall more wisely enjoy such characteristic passages as those in which she speaks of Tisbe and herself before the tapestry, or describes what she saw and dimly understood of the stormy interview in the Via Vittoria, or pictures the delightfully domestic scenes at the Villa till all turns suddenly into tragedy with

> A tap; we started up; you know the rest!

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[1] Jones, *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher* (edition of 1896), p. 333.

[2] VII. 354. [3] VII. 1386-8.

[4] Jones, *op. cit.* pp. 90, 95. On the alleged optimism of *The Ring and the Book*, see the Introduction to Book XII.

[5] The sophistication of poor Pippa is carried far in an excellent edition of *Paracelsus* by M. L. Lee and K. B. Locock, p. 42. Her 'God's in his heaven, etc.' requires, it appears, a 'clue', which 'Transcendence rather than Immanence provides'.

Pompilia, however, as I have said, is more than a child. She is a mother, and she is one of the two parties in the spiritual romance which gives its supreme interest to the poem.

'Womanliness', says the unnamed heroine of *The Inn Album*, 'means only motherhood'[1]; but, though the poet portrays many kinds of womanliness, it has been observed that motherhood (like fatherhood) finds little expression in his poetry, only perhaps in his Pompilia; in *Ivàn Ivànovitch* a defective sense of it meets with a terrible punishment. In *The Ring and the Book* it is treated with a penetrating comprehension, with a richness of sentiment, enshrined in most melodious verse. In some places, indeed, Pompilia is just the happy young mother, the Madonna of many merely delightful Italian pictures; her prattle about her boy and her delight in him are like the prattle and the delight of other young mothers, but with their charm immeasurably enhanced by the beauty of some stray thoughts[2] and not only by the music of her words. But there is a rarer beauty and a deeper insight in other passages where the full significance of maternity is revealed[3] or the dawn of the maternal instinct portrayed; see especially 1222 *seqq.*, the loveliest lines, perhaps, in the whole poem.—Mindful of what was said in the first paragraph of this Introduction I must not linger upon this holy ground; I leave it with a reference to some fine criticism in Mrs. Orr's *Life* of the poet. 'The sudden rapturous sense of maternity', she wrote, 'which in the poetic rendering of the case becomes Pompilia's impulse to self-protection, was beyond her age and her culture; it was not suggested by the facts; and, what is more striking, it was not a natural development of Mr. Browning's imagination concerning them'. Mrs. Orr insisted that the 'parental instinct was among the weakest in his nature', and continued: 'The ingenuously unbounded maternal pride, the almost luscious maternal sentiments, of Pompilia's dying moments can only associate themselves in our mind with Mrs. Browning's personal utterances, and some notable passages in *Casa Guidi*

[1] *The Inn Album*, p. 186. [2] See *e.g.* VII. 45, 277-8, 1657-8.
[3] See *e.g.* VII. 620-25, 1690-93, 1740-67.

Windows and *Aurora Leigh*[1]. . . . Mrs. Browning's spiritual presence on this occasion'—the writer had in mind the dedication in Book I.—' was more than a presiding memory of the heart. I am convinced that it entered largely into the conception of Pompilia and, so far as this depended on it, the character of the whole work'[2].

Yet deeper even than her maternal instinct, more vital in Browning's whole conception, is Pompilia's mystical devotion to Caponsacchi. The sense of motherhood, aroused on that bright spring morning at Arezzo, gave her an energy and a courage of which before she had shown little sign; but the most notable manifestation of this courage and energy was given on 'the impulse to serve God',

> Not save myself,—*no—nor my child unborn*![3]—

it occurred when Guido was arresting Caponsacchi at Castelnuovo and she found

> Not my hand simply struck from the angel's, but
> The very angel's self made foul i' the face
> By the fiend who struck there.

'That', she says, 'I would not bear, that only I resisted!'[4] —Again it is to the vindication of her 'far beyond friend'[5] that her thoughts most constantly revert:

> I must lay my babe away with God,
> Nor think of him again, for gratitude.
> Yes, my last breath shall wholly spend itself
> In one attempt more to disperse the stain,
> The mist from other breath foul mouths have made,
> About a lustrous and pellucid soul . . .
> Giuseppe-Maria Caponsacchi![6]

And when, after her very last words about her boy, she has bidden farewell to the friends at her bedside—

> I thank and bless you every one!
> No more now: I withdraw from earth and man
> To my own soul, compose myself for God[7]—

she must needs add, 'Well, and there is more'; and her monologue ends with 'the exalted fervour of her invocation' of 'the lover of her life, her soldier-saint', 'its blending

[1] See the last page of Part II. of *Casa Guidi Windows*, and the Sixth Book of *Aurora Leigh*.
[2] Mrs. Orr, *Life*, pp. 270-72.
[3] VII. 1600-1601.
[4] VII. 1619-22.
[5] VI. 1611.
[6] VII. 930-35, 941.
[7] VII. 1768-70.

of spiritual ecstasy with half-realized earthly emotion'[1] Of the passages which describe the sudden origin of her faith in Caponsacchi[2], the development, during the journey from Arezzo, of her devotion to the 'one heart that gave her all the Spring'[3], I will not speak; nor need I dwell on the difference, most delicately but yet sharply drawn, between the feeling of the man for the woman and of the woman for the man; she will not call hers love, for she has known that word too often profaned. The difference is deep, far deeper than the difference, deep as that also is, between the circumstances under which the two speakers 'say their say'.

I have sought to show in Appendix V. that, though Browning never would admit it, his Pompilia is by no means the same person as the Pompilia of the Yellow Book, and I have argued that the contrast between these two Pompilias, for more than one reason, deserves careful study—for this reason especially, that such study will enhance immensely, and in unexpected ways, the student's admiration of the poet's creative genius and of this particular creation.

NOTES

1-2.] Pompilia was born, according to the baptismal register, on July 17, 1680 (*O.Y.B.* clv., *E.L.* 159); she is speaking on January 6, 1698.

4. *Lorenzo in Lucina.*] See note on II. 6.

8-9. *'tis writ that I was married, etc.*] Browning had not seen the entry in the marriage register; he misdates the marriage and mis-states its incidents (see note on II. 70 and Appendix III.).

10. *When they insert my death, etc.*] See the extract from the register of deaths (printed in Treves, p. 300) and Appendix II. *ad fin.* The register mentions neither what Pompilia would wish to be omitted, nor (of course) what she would wish to be added.

14. *Exactly two weeks.*] Nearly three; if the only statement on the point in the records (Bottini's in *O.Y.B.* clxxxiv., *E.L.* 189), which Browning seems to accept (see note on V. 1471), is correct, the boy was born on December 18.

16, 17.] Search for an entry of the boy's baptism has been

[1] Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 272. [2] See note on IV. 944. [3] VII. 1527.

made in the registers of San Lorenzo and six adjoining parishes, but without success (Treves, pp. 125, 300).

22. *what the marble lion meant.*] The two lions in the portico of San Lorenzo, one on each side of the door, are much older than the church itself. That to the right of the door, which 'has a singularly benevolent and even fatuous expression', is playing with a mannikin who strokes his breast (or mane); that to the left, 'with an aspect of extreme ferocity', is perhaps 'eating the figure of a prostrate man' (according to Treves, has a headless animal, apparently a dog, between its forepaws). Browning, perhaps misled by Leighton (see note on II. 6), mis-states the position of the ferocious lion (line 25).—According to an authority quoted by Hare (*Walks in Rome*, i. p. 45; cf. Treves, p. 120) the lions symbolize respectively 'the benignity of the Church towards the neophyte and the docile', and her 'severity towards the impenitent and heretical'.

23. *With half his body rushing from the wall.*] The lions 'appear to be emerging from the wall, since only the heads and the shoulders of the beasts are in evidence' (Treves, p. 119).

27. *to be buried there, I hope.*] See Appendix II.—A cemetery is attached to the church, and tombstones cover the floor of its portico.

30. *Gaetano, for a reason.*] Browning found the boy's name in the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 263: 'Pompilia bore a son, to whom she gave the name Gaetano, to which saint she had dedicated herself'. Gaetano, archbishop of Teate (Chieti), was the founder of the order of Theatins (called after his see). He lived from 1480 to 1547, but was not canonized till 1671.—Browning represents Pompilia as having fixed on the name for her child, if a boy, eight months before its birth (VI. 1389), and as giving a reason for the choice of name below, 100-107.

31. *Don Celestine*], her confessor on her death-bed.

32-3. *he it was Baptized me.*] A slip of Browning's, as the baptismal certificate (*O.Y.B.* clv., *E.L.* 159) shows.

38. *twenty-two dagger-wounds.*] *O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263.

42. *baptized and hid away.*] See V. 1478, note.

46. *two days after he was born.*] It would then be time for him to be baptized; see note on IV. 214.

57. *we know where.*] See below, 235-7.

65. *gets to be.*] See below, 110, 118, 332, and the note on IV. 1541.

82.] On the question, 'could Pompilia write?' see Appendix IV.

103-5.] See note on 30 above.

139. *one surprising day*] in April or May 1694, soon after the return of the Comparini to Rome.

153. *Guard them and guide them.*] See notes on II. 944, V. 451.

156-7.] Refers to the suit for divorce.

160-74.] See Introduction to this Book.

175-80.] Pompilia was questioned in court about the love-letters; see Appendix IV.

189-91.] Diana.

193-6.] Daphne, who when pursued by Apollo was turned into a bay tree (Ovid, *Met.* 1. 548-52).

193. *such.*] This colloquial use of 'such' occurs again in 265, 368, 1236; it suits the simple style of Pompilia's monologue, compare *e.g. A Lovers' Quarrel*, x.:

> Or I tint your lip
> With a burnt stick's tip
> And you turn into such a man!

207-8.] See V. 1478, note.

217-18.] See Appendix II.

230. *Our cause is gained.*] He means, I suppose, that the Court, by first consigning Pompilia to the Scalette, and then allowing her to keep to the Comparini-home *pro carcere*, has shielded her from Guido.—Neither of his 'causes' in the courts had as yet been won.

235. *at the other villa, we know where.*] See above, 57, and Appendix II.

238. *wine sincere outside the city gate.*] Cf. 1 Peter ii. 2, 'as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word'. This use of 'sincere' is now obsolete, but the Italian *sincero* has this meaning.

The *carrettieri* who bring wine into Rome 'do not enjoy a very good reputation for honesty'; they dilute the wine on the journey. 'This, however, is the least danger which the wine incurs. As soon as it enters the gates it is destined to far worse adulteration of every kind, and lucky is he who gets a bottle of pure and *sincere* wine from any *osteria*, pot-house, or drinking-shop within the walls' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 325).

The passage shows that Browning placed the villa which he made the scene of the murders *inside* the walls of the city.

245. *shall to bed.*] Cf. *Hamlet* 2. 2. 521, 'It shall to the barber's, with your beard'.

262. *through the seven.*] What are they? Not, I think, the seven *basilicae maiores* of Rome, for the Ara Caeli, in which the representation here mentioned is specially splendid and which Pietro must surely, therefore, have visited, is not one of them.—Representations of the birth of Christ, called *presepi* (*presepio* = 'manger'), are given at many churches in Rome from Christmas to Twelfth-Night; see descriptions in Story, *Roba di Roma*, pp. 74-7, Bagot, *My Italian Year*, c. viii.

267. *A tap: we started up: you know the rest.*] The single line is more effective than a description. Pompilia does not dwell

on horrors; indeed, she says that they have passed from her memory (see below, 584-602).

279.] A badly-written line. The reader at first supposes that the word 'that' echoes the 'that' at the end of the previous line, and refers to the imaginary falsehood described in 275-8; but when he comes to the words 'and all harm did' he finds that this interpretation is mistaken, and that the 'that' of line 279 refers to the real falsehood of Violante, described in 270-74.

286.] The bargain between Violante and Pompilia's real mother was struck (according to IV. 186-8) six months before Pompilia's birth.

291-2.] Cf. 879-94 below.

300-301. *who would frown thereat? Well, God, you see!*] The effectively abrupt introduction, in the simplest words, of the thought, what God's judgment on the matter in hand is or may be, is characteristic of the poet. Compare the 'But what will God say?' in *The Worst of it*, v.; the 'And yet God has not said a word' at the end of *Porphyria's Lover*; see also I. 582. An impression of the same sort is produced by the last words of the parable called *Fears and Scruples*: 'What if this friend happen to be —God?'

302. *that*] is surely misplaced; its right place would be after the 'because'-clause, at the beginning of 304.

315. *let it go nor keep it fast.*] She could not let the falsehood go by admitting the truth, *e.g.* at the time of the marriage-negotiations; nor could she maintain it right through to the end.

320. *to make amends*], *i.e.* to Pompilia; to give her a position about which there should be no ambiguity; see below, 328 *seqq.* The reference is not to Violante's making amends to God by her confession during the jubilee of 1694.

323.] See note on III. 250.

325. *a speech.*] Such a speech as that reported in III. 264-372.

330.] See above, 303.

333.] Genesis ii. 24, Mark x. 8.

335. *Should in a husband have a husband*], *i.e.* a real husband, not a sham one as her reputed parents had been sham parents.

351. *that*], *i.e.* from the fact that.

375. *This may have made the change too terrible.*] Contrast 117-18 above.

379. *the same eve.*] A mistake; see note on II. 70.

380-81.] See Appendix III.

390. *the slim young man.*] Perseus with the winged sandals, rescuing Andromeda.

395-8.] The description of Guido is taken from the Secondary Source; see note on IV. 717-19. Professor Hodell justly remarks that 'the Poet has probably stepped beyond dramatic propriety' in putting the description (which she repeats in 443) into the mouth of Pompilia (*O. Y. B.* 298); it is out of keeping with her character and the occasion.

398.] See note on X. 724.

423. *Master Malpichi.*] Malpichi (or Malpighi) of Bologna was the greatest biologist of his time. Gilbert Burnet, afterwards William III.'s Bishop of Salisbury, wrote in 1685 after a visit to Bologna: 'I saw not one of the chief Glories of the Place; for the famous Malpighius was out of Town while I was there' (*Some Letters*, edition of 1724, p. 191). Malpighi came to Rome in 1691 to be physician to the Pope; he died in 1694 (cf. XII. 39).—The Comparini were fortunate in securing the great man as a general practitioner!

426.] See note on II. 70.

427. *the Lion's mouth*], *i.e.* the Via della Bocca di Leone. If you go by this street from the Via Vittoria to San Lorenzo you have only to walk over a little 'bit of Corso'. Browning lodged in the Via della Bocca di Leone during two visits to Rome.

435. *Who proved the brother.*] A mistake; see note on II. 361.

440. *Two tapers.*] Cf. II. 360, where Half-Rome says that the marriage took place 'o' the sly . . . by a hasty candle-blink'. See Appendix III.

445. *O' the chancel.*] Within 'the little marble balustrade' of II. 20.

449-50.] Ephesians v. 23, 24.—As in the miracle at Cana in Galilee (John iv.) the water, resigning its own properties, submitted to identification with the wine, so in marriage the wife should submit herself to her husband as the Church submits herself to Christ. Is the priest's symbolical interpretation of the miracle an accepted piece of Catholic exegesis?

463. *the gutter's roaring sea.*] Open drains ran down the middle of most of the streets, the Corso included (see Treves, p. 106); the rain would swell them into 'roaring seas'.

465. *Trussed up in church . . . by me, the kite.*] I was nearly coming, says Pietro, like a kite into your dovecote (the church), trussing you both up like a pair of pigeons and carrying you off.

472. *the next three weeks.*] See Appendix III.

482-583.] Based on a few words in the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccx., *E.L.* 212): 'After a few days, it having been discovered by Pietro that the marriage was an accomplished fact, though he vigorously denounced the proceeding, nevertheless, since "what has been done cannot be undone" . . . the poor old man was compelled to drink the cup of his bitternesses'.

503. *The done thing, undone?*] See the last note. The proverbial words quoted in the Italian pamphlet are given in Latin: *factum infectum fieri non potest.* Plautus has in his *Aulularia* (4. 10. 15) *Factum est illud; fieri infectum non potest.*

578. *the cast panting ox.*] Cf. XI. 978.

590-91. *bleat and bell Of goats, etc.*] A familiar sound to Pompilia, town-bred though she was. See Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 362:

'Every morning flocks of goats are driven [from the Campagna] or led into the towns, where they may be seen crouching in the streets, while the goat-herd sells their milk fresh from the udder to his various customers, who come to the door and call for him'.

606. *those points of my support.*] They are stated in 617-25.

608. *opposite the Spanish House*], *i.e.* the house of the Spanish ambassador, which gives the Piazza di Spagna its name.

620-25.] See Introduction to this Book.

620. *blest bliss.*] 'Blest' may be a misprint; the first and second editions have 'best'.

628. *help me find.*] Cf. X. 1831-2, 'helped produce'.

634-5. *a light That's later than my life-time*], *i.e.* that first came to her when on her death-bed.

640. *To get enriched.*] See note on IV. 1541. Colloquial uses of 'to get' are specially common in this Book.

647. *he began deception first*], *i.e.* by representing himself as having a considerable income; cf. III. 275-7 and (*e.g.*) *O.Y.B.* 209, *E.L.* 259: 'when they (*i.e.* the Franceschini) had made it appear that their income was of considerable amount, they succeeded in their intent; although it was afterwards found that their entire capital did not amount to the total of their income' as they had stated it in writing. See also *O.Y.B.* ccxi., *E.L.* 213.

648. *in one point*], *i.e.* their maintenance at Arezzo.

655.] The emphatic 'Wrong' at the beginning of the line does duty for two syllables; cf. XI. 521.

677-80.] Cf. *e.g.* Pompilia's deposition, *O.Y.B.* lxxxiii.-iv., *E.L.* 91-2.

678. *A lure-owl.*] See above, 398, and X. 724.

695-710.] In her pathetic anxiety to find excuse for Guido Pompilia would fain believe that *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*; she declares that as she reaches a fuller understanding of his treatment of her she finds that she has little to forgive (cf. 631-7). If she had only understood his 'true intent', which she misunderstood and thwarted! But it is obvious to the reader that a comprehension of Guido's true intent could only make his conduct less forgiveable. She had supposed that his motive was mere jealousy and that his aim was to keep her and Caponsacchi apart; it turned out that his motive was malignant hatred, that his aim was to bring them together and drive them into crime.—A misgiving that her attempt at palliation fails comes over her as she develops it (see Introduction to Book VII.).

For the complete forgiveness which Pompilia's heart prompts, and for which her head, even in her weakness, would gladly find reasons, cf. 1707-39 below.

734. *barely twelve years old.*] She was well over thirteen; born July 17, 1680; married September 6 (Browning supposed, late in December), 1693.

736.] Cf. 472 above.

746.] All this was suggested, as Professor Hodell points out, by a passage in a letter produced in the Process of Flight (*O.Y.B.* liv., *E.L.* 55), written by some one at Arezzo to Pietro at Rome; the writer says that Pompilia, soon after the departure of the Comparini, *fece strepito grande, perche non voleua andare à dormire col Signor Guido*; cf. *O.Y.B.* cvi. (*E.L.* 114).

762.] Genesis i. 28.

808-14.] See note on II. 500-503.

821.] Matthew xiii. 34.

823. *a flower-fig, the prime boast of May.*] Of May? 'There are two crops of figs on each tree. The first ripen *in July*, and are called *fichi-fiori*, or flower-figs' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 385).

829. *The tree should bear an apple.*] The Archbishop, who thinks fit to play the humourist, remembers that he has lately referred (line 765) to 'the apple' plucked from a tree in the Creator's 'orchard'.

857-8.] 'The eye of God', says Pompilia, 'penetrated the ruined outside of my life, and saw that the reason why I was careless of appearances was that, through my following the Archbishop's advice, my soul was desecrated and its light quenched'.

860. *freed*] expresses Pompilia's meaning better than 'saved', for which it was substituted in the second edition; the change was also required by the presence of 'save' in line 861.

861-2.] They said that Pompilia was not merely a bad wife, and therefore 'wanton', but was cynically wanton; for she didn't care to save appearances by dissembling her aversion for her husband.

869. *mud so murk.*] 'Murk', like 'dusk' (I. 593), is common enough as an adjective in modern poetry (cf. *e.g. Luria*, III., 'the murk mid-forest'); 'murky', which has superseded it in modern prose, was rare before the seventeenth century ('Hell is murky' occurs in *Macbeth*, 5. 1. 41).

877. *hate*], *i.e.* of her own child, whom she was ready to sell to Violante.

879-94.] Cf. 291-2 above.

880. *try be good.*] Cf. VI. 1819, 'like daring try be good'.

893-4.] Cf. 281-4 above.

911. *whose tonsure the rich dark-brown hides.*] See II. 787, note.

915-16. *lay so light, etc.*] Cf. VI. 1410-14.

930-31.] That being so, gratitude compels me to dismiss Gaetano from my thoughts and to spend my last breath in showing that Caponsacchi is 'purity in quintessence' (925).

935. *lustrous and pellucid soul.*] When *The Ring and the Book* was published Rossetti had in the MS. of his *Love's Nocturn*:—

> Fair with honourable eyes,
> Lamps of a pellucid soul.

To avoid the charge of plagiarism he sacrificed 'pellucid', substituting in successive editions 'an auspicious soul' and 'a translucent soul' (Sir Edward Cook, *Literary Recreations*, p. 292-3).

950. *I was at a public play.*] Cf. VI. 394-433, and see note on IV. 944.

951. *In the last days of Carnival last March.*] Easter Day in 1697 was April 14; Ash Wednesday was therefore February 27 and Carnival was over before March began. The date of the theatre-incident is not fixed by the records.

952. *but now know well.*] She knows that she was taken there as a lure to Caponsacchi.

979. *By the dust-handful*], *pulveris exigui iactu* (Virgil, *Georg.* 4. 87).

988. *my husband's cousin.*] 'Cousin' is used in the wider sense of the word. Conti's brother had married Guido's sister; see note on IV. 381 *seqq.*

992.] Psalm lv. 6.

1015. *My cornet battered like a cannon-ball.*] The *confetti* thrown during Carnival 'sting like small shot' (Crawford, *Ave Roma Immortalis*, i. p. 196). A cornet is 'a paper-twist' (VI. 409) such as grocers use.

1029. *O Christ, what hinders, etc.*] From Pompilia's deposition, *O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92: *Tornati che fussimo à Casa mi appuntò vna Pistola in petto dicendo—Oh Cristo chi mi tiene, che non ti stenno quì, ammiri bene il Caponsacchi, se non vuoi, che te facci cosi, e non ti ammazzi.*

1041. *pink*], *i.e.* pierce; see note on II. 1038.

1046. "*Let God save the innocent!*"] She remembers the prayer suggested to her by Pietro on another occasion (see 527 above).

1053.] Cf. VI. 521-2, 554.

1057. *On this the thrust and that the shame.*] See above, 1030. For the form of expression cf. III. 570-71, 'this the poisoner And that the parricide'.

1064-90.] Caponsacchi, says Margherita, is in real danger from Guido, who does not threaten in sport. To be sure, he did not stab the serving-man or poison the stranger who crossed his path in his irregular amours; he had the former sent off to the wars, he married off the latter to an unattractive 'somebody else'. But Caponsacchi comes between him and his lawful lady-wife, and being a priest he can neither fight nor marry; to get rid of him he must and he will kill him. You should put him on his guard.

1099. *There is no other help.*] But there is this help, 'or we should craze'. 'Craze', properly, as the passive participle shows, an active verb (=French *écraser*) and so used by Milton, is neuter here, as twice in *Paracelsus*: I. ('Till I near craze'), V. ('I shall craze like him').

1125. '*My idol!*'] One of the love-letters begins with *Amato Idolo mio* (*O.Y.B.* xcvii., *E.L.* 104).

1143. *a star.*] See note on 1405 below.

1145. *The imposthume.*] See note on III. 403.

1150. *prevent*], *i.e.* anticipate.

1152. *the pretty verse, etc.*] No pieces of verse were produced among the love-letters, but the letters contain allusions to verses sent by the lover; one of these letters is signed Mirtillo (1153). Berdoe tells his readers, in his note on 'A sonnet from Mirtillo', that Mirtillo 'was probably a minor poet of the period'!

1173. *I am the Pope, am Sextus, now the Sixth.*] Cf. XI. 705.—A lunatic might declare that he was Sixtus Sextus, but no pope has chosen to be that. The last Pope Sixtus was the Fifth (1585–1590).

1174. *that Twelfth Innocent, proclaimed to-day*], *i.e.* on July 12, 1691, when Pompilia was close upon eleven years old.

1188. *by Saint Joseph.*] She selects her saint with a reference to Caponsacchi's Christian name.

1196-7. *Even when I found, etc.*] Cf. XI. 852-7.—Pompilia means that people could only 'take in' the fact of the mutual love of Caponsacchi and herself by supposing it to be illicit love.

1200. *It had got half through April.*] For the use of 'got' see note on IV. 1541.—Easter-Day (April 14) was just past; cf. VI. 1116, note.

1208. *the Archbishop gets him back to Rome.*] In one of the love-letters 'Mirtillo' (writing as Caponsacchi on the evening, apparently, of the Saturday after Easter) is made to say: 'I should like to know if you can start on Sunday evening, that is, tomorrow evening, because, if we don't start tomorrow evening, God knows when it will be possible owing to the scarcity of carriages, for the Bishop is to leave here with three carriages on Wednesday' (*O.Y.B.* xcviii., *E.L.* 105).

1210. *Even Caponsacchi.*] Caponsacchi speaks in his deposition of his intention to go to Rome as having been formed, and mentioned to Conti, irrespectively of Pompilia (*O.Y.B.* lxxxviii., *E.L.* 96).

1215-19.] Spinello Aretino (*c.* 1323–1410) 'painted various stories of St. Michael the archangel, in the chapel dedicated to that saint, which is now used as a belfry', in the church of San Francesco at Arezzo; and in his old age he 'undertook to paint certain stories from the life of St. Michael for the Brotherhood of Sant' Agnolo in that city' (Vasari, *Lives of the Painters*, i. 258, 269). Browning here refers to a famous fresco in San Francesco in which the archangel combats the dragon; it is described by Mrs. Jameson in her *Sacred and Legendary Art*, pp. 108-9.

Lines 1218-19 suggest the comparison, so often made in the poem, of Guido to a dragon from whom Pompilia must be delivered by a 'soldier-saint' (see note on III. 1065-6, and below, 1323-4).

1225-36.] Nature is in sympathy with the speaker.—Such

natural pictures as we have here, painted with a few strokes of the brush, often occur in Browning's earlier poems, not so often in *The Ring and the Book*, and still less often in the poet's later work.

1236. *such sky !*] See note on 193 above.

1249-51.] See V. 948-51, where Guido tells the judges that his threats of 'desperate doings' with sword and pistol were mere 'bugaboo-and-baby-work'.

1253-4.] Cf. 1283-5 below.

1267-8.] The Governor wrote to Paolo (August 2, 1694) that the Comparini 'had taken all the jewellery from the lady-wife, which I forced them to give back to her' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxi., *E.L.* 90). The statement was confirmed by Guido's evidence in the Process of Flight (*O.Y.B.* ciii., *E.L.* 111).

1274. *who had spoke the word wrought this*], *i.e.* the word which prompted the Governor's threat; the speaker of the word was of course Guido.

1277. *snicker.*] See note on I. 429.

1282-1302.] See note on III. 1015 *seqq.*

1306. *To Guillichini, that's of kin.*] See note on II. 934.

1309. *Then I tried Conti.*] See note on VI. 2024-5.

1319. *not quite so bold, etc.*] It was probably from Conti that Pompilia heard that Caponsacchi *era huomo risoluto* (see her deposition, *O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 93); the Second Anonymous Pamphlet says that Conti advised Pompilia to secure his assistance in her flight, because his spirit *hauerebbe superato ogni cimento* (*O.Y.B.* ccxiv., *E.L.* 215). Allusions to his courage or recklessness, his boldness or audacity, are frequent in the records.

1323. *he's your true Saint George.*] See note on III. 1065-6.

1326-7. *that piece I' the Pieve.*] A Saint George by Vasari, over the high altar.

1336. *this intends to say*] *ciò vuol dire, cela veut dire.*

1351. *on one leg, like the sentry crane.*] 'After [companies of cranes] fall to the earth, for to rest . . . they ordain watches that they may rest the more surely, and the watches stand upon one foot, and each of them holdeth a little stone in the other foot, high from the earth, that they may be waked by falling of the stone, if it hap that they sleep' (Bartholomew Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, pp. 130-31, ed. Steele).

1369. *To play with silk, and spurn the horsehair springe.*] In the first edition 'the silk'. Apparently a metaphor from catching small birds who are to be attracted by bright-coloured silk in which a horsehair springe is hidden.

1405. *a star.*] The star is Caponsacchi, who was to lead her steps to the birthplace of her child (see below, 1448-50; cf. Matthew ii. 9). But Caponsacchi is her 'star' without this particular reference; see above, 1143.

1417. *In some such sense as this.*] Caponsacchi gives a fuller account of what she said (VI. 725-880).

1431. *that miracle.*] That he wishes her good, though a stranger, 'were strange, But that my whole life is so strange' (VI. 758-9).

1434. *Since a long while . . . I am.*] The present tense is used as in French or Italian.

1435. *I am in course, etc.*] According to the depositions of both the parties Pompilia's appeal to Caponsacchi was based on this ground (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv., lxxxviii.-ix., *E.L.* 93, 96).

1444. *The first word, etc.*] This is contradicted by Pompilia's deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92); she says that on an earlier occasion she had begged Caponsacchi not to excite Guido's jealousy by passing the Franceschini palace, and that he had had much to say in reply. Caponsacchi virtually denies that this happened; his statement is not inconsistent with that which Browning here attributes to Pompilia.

1448-50.] See note on 1405 above.

1456. "*mine*".] Refers to 'I am yours', 1447.

1468. *Turning now red that was so white.*] The same star flashes now white now red; whether Caponsacchi says that he will take her to Rome or counsels her to stay at Arezzo, in either case he shows the same star-like loyalty. Still, the white flash is the better.

1476-7. *how to prepare, etc.*] Caponsacchi says in his deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxix., *E.L.* 96): 'I told her that I had secured the *calesse* for the following morning early, and that I should await her at the San Clemente gate'. See the note on VI. 1080-84.

1485. "*He hath a devil*".] John vii. 20, viii. 48, etc.

1495. *seqq.*] The passage was altered to its present form in the second edition. I cannot understand it as it ran originally:—

> I did think, do think, in the thought shall die,
> That to have Caponsacchi for my guide,
> Ever, etc.

Nothing follows to which 'to have Caponsacchi, etc.' can be the subject. As amended the passage is without difficulty.

1504.] In the first edition—

> Not this man,—who, from his own soul, re-writes.

1506. *votarist.*] Browning follows Shakespeare in sometimes preferring 'votarist' to 'votary'; cf. VIII. 863, *Christopher Smart*, II.

1510. *sight clearest so.*] An absolute construction after Browning's manner.—The votarist worships by faith and not by sight, but such worship makes him see more clearly.

1515-18.] See Introduction to Book VII.

1520-21], 'crept into my cup instead of humming idly and happily in the spring sunshine outside'.

1527. *This one heart.*] See 1519 above and 1529 below.

1530. *too hard*] to be left unmentioned.

1531. *must have a name, though I forget.*] Cf. VI. 1208, where Caponsacchi says that he 'forgets the names' of places at which incidents occurred during the journey. In the absence of names we have topographical indications and time-indications, but the latter sometimes appear to rule out identifications which the former suggest. Hence probably Sir Frederick Treves, whose knowledge of the road is most complete, does not attempt to give his readers guidance in such a passage as 1532-47.

The 'plain' of 1532 is the Umbrian plain with which visitors to Assisi are familiar, and the 'grey place' of 1538 might be thought to be Assisi. But the travellers were well past Perugia and in view of Assisi 'in the determined morning' (VI. 1199-1205), and 'eve was fading fast' (VII. 1534) when Caponsacchi called Pompilia's attention to the 'grey place'. Time-indications suggest that the 'grey place' was not far short of Foligno, which they reached the same day when 'it was dark' (VI. 1275).

1553. *To try.*] In the first edition 'I try'.

1555. *Did not he find, etc.*] Cf. VI. 1332.

1558. *expecting*], watching.

1559. *the sudden hole, etc.*], *i.e.* the revelation of the joy of motherhood.

1579-80.] Cf. VI. 1410-13, 1618-20.

1580-84.] Pompilia deposed in the Process of Flight, a bare fortnight after the flight itself, that she arrived at Castelnuovo with Caponsacchi [on the Wednesday morning] 'at dawn', and when cross-examined she stuck to her assertion: 'I did in truth arrive at Castelnuovo at the reddening of dawn' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv., lxxxvi., *E.L.* 94). It is certain, however, that this was not the case; Pompilia's statement, though echoed in the post-Browning pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* 220, *E.L.* 274), was unsupported by other evidence and was contradicted by three witnesses for the prosecution (*O.Y.B.* cxi., *E.L.* 120) as well as by Caponsacchi himself (*O.Y.B.* lxxxix., *E.L.* 97). The time of the arrival was about half-past seven (*sub hora prima noctis cum dimidio*) on the Tuesday evening.

Either then Pompilia made a mistake or she was guilty of what Guido's lawyers, in their print of her deposition, called a *mendacium*. If she made a mistake, it was a very strange one; the incident which she misrepresented was very recent and was of capital importance, it would (so it seemed) have been accurately fixed in her memory. If on the other hand she lied, the lie had obviously a strong motive. These considerations impressed the friendly lawyers; they might perhaps have argued that Pompilia would scarcely have lied where detection of a lie was certain, but they did not so argue; they admitted the *mendacium*, while protesting that it did not prove her guilty of the graver misconduct alleged.

Thus Bottini: 'Though Francesca Pompilia in her examination aimed at concealing a longer stay at the said inn by asserting that she came there in the dawn, yet no proof of the alleged adultery can be argued from the said lie, because she told it, perhaps, with a view to averting more thoroughly the suspicion of violated modesty, which might have been conceived from a longer delay and a better opportunity' (*O.Y.B.* clxxxi., *E.L.* 187). And Lamparelli, who was specially concerned to maintain the good name of Pompilia, says precisely the same (*O.Y.B.* cclv., *E.L.* 250).

Browning was of course dissatisfied with any halting vindication of his heroine, and some words above-quoted from her deposition ('at the reddening of dawn', *al rosseggiar dell' alba*) suggested to his resourceful mind a means of clearing her memory from the imputation of falsehood. Worn out, he conceived, by her distresses and her fatigue, she mistook 'the reddening white' of sunset for 'the whitening red' of sunrise:

> She mixes both times, morn and eve, in one,
> Having lived through a blank of night 'twixt each
> Though dead-asleep, unaware as a corpse
> (III. 1187-95).

I have argued at the end of Appendix V. that the explanation is not convincing.

1603. *silly-sooth.*] See note on III. 806.

1606. *I remonstrated, Then sank to silence.*] See *O.Y.B.* l., lxxx.-lxxxi., *E.L.* 51, 89-90.

1612. *They were not persecuted, etc.*], *i.e.* of course, it was not the case that while they were persecuted I was happy.

1616. *Not for my own sake, etc.*] She fled from Arezzo not for her own sake, but for her unborn babe's sake; she resisted Guido at Castelnuovo neither for her own sake, nor for her unborn babe's sake, but for Caponsacchi's—at the bidding of God who forbids us to 'bear to see his angels bear' (1599). Cf. VI. 1540 *seqq.*

1629. *while I told, etc.*] See above, 749 *seqq.*, and, for the jest, 817-41.

1640-41.] See II. 1029-48, IX. 929-42, where the impression which Pompilia's speech and action made upon the bystanders is described; cf. the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 262: 'The young girl was not terrified at the sight of her husband, but on the contrary she took courage and reproved him for all the cruelties which had been practised upon her, and by which she had been constrained to this step. Then Franceschini was thunderstruck, not knowing how or what to answer'.

1644. *I wish nor want*], *i.e.* I neither wish nor want. For this common idiom cf. *e.g.* VI. 1715, and *Measure for Measure*, 3. 2. 85-6:

> *Pompey.* You will not bail me, then, sir?
> *Lucio.* Then, Pompey, nor now.

1649.] Cf. the Pope, X. 705-6.

1695. *The night and the tap.*] See note on 267 above:

> A tap: we started up: you know the rest.

1709. *I—pardon him?*] On her death-bed, when exhorted by her confessor to pardon Guido, Pompilia 'answered with tears in her eyes, in a quiet and pitiful voice, "May Jesus pardon him as I have done with all my heart already"—"May God pardon him in heaven, as I pardon him on earth"' (*O.Y.B.* lvii., lviii., *E.L.* 57, 59.)

1721-2.] Acts v. 15.

1726-7.] Cf. X. 356, 542. That hate palliates wickedness, because it is 'a truth', is a philosopher's paradox which comes better from the Pope than from the unsophisticated Pompilia.

With Pompilia's excuse for Guido compare some lines in a passage quoted in another connexion by Lord Morley (*Recollections*, i. p. 247) from Bulwer's apology for O'Connell in his 'fine half-forgotten poem *St. Stephen's*':

> Hate in the man, whatever else appear
> Fickle or false, was stedfast and sincere.

1731. *he nowise made himself.*] See XI. 939-42, where Guido declares that he shall say to God in his defence,

> I am one huge and sheer mistake,—whose fault?
> Not mine at least, who did not make myself!

and he adds:

> Someone declares my wife excused me so!
> Perhaps she knew what argument to use.

See also XI. 2100-2101.

1737-9.] My polluted flesh, says Pompilia, would have needed disinfection, had not Guido disinfected it by fire; for that I owe him thanks.

1739.] 1 Corinthians iii. 15.

1746. *The great life*], *i.e.* Pompilia's, contrasted with 'the little life' of 1748.

1755. *Outlived.*] The 'outlive' of the first edition must be a misprint.

1764. *born of love not hate.*] Contrast XII. 817, where Browning speaks of Gaetano as 'born of love and hate'.

1793-4.] Do I doubt for a moment that it is *only* the world (*i.e.* deference to its opinion) that keeps him away? But for the world, he would have been by my side in Rome in the flesh as he is in spirit. Pompilia does not know that Caponsacchi is in fact in Rome, doing what she describes in 1795-7.

1798. *I know where, etc.*] Though away at Civita, he is with

me here in spirit. We *seem* to be apart, but that is only 'the world's insight' (1791-2).

1827.] Matthew xxii. 30, etc.

1841-3.] Caponsacchi has resolved as Pompilia would have him do; see VI. 2077.

BOOK VIII.—DOMINUS HYACINTHUS DE ARCHANGELIS

INTRODUCTION

We turn the page upon the noble aspiration which ends the serenely beautiful death-scene of Pompilia, and are confronted, perhaps affronted, by the expansive joviality of the rollicking Arcangeli; between Pompilia's close —

> Through such souls alone
> God stooping shows sufficient of His light
> For us i' the dark to rise by. And I rise—

and Arcangeli's opening—

> Ah, my Giacinto, he's no ruddy rogue,
> Is not Cinone? What, to-day we're eight?
> Seven and one's eight, I hope, old curly-pate!—

the contrast, as M. Berger says, is almost 'brutal'[1]. Not less abruptly, though the transition is less theatrical, Bottini's pompous frivolity at the end of Book IX. gives place to the solemn earnestness with which the Pope addresses himself, at the beginning of Book X., to his searching analysis of character and motive.

The speeches of the lawyers are an interlude between monologues of deep spiritual import, and many critics have taken exception to them as an unnecessary and irrelevant interlude, 'beside the mark and adventitious'. One suggests that, having written them, the poet should have suppressed them, and even Sir Leslie Stephen could find no sufficient defence for their insertion[2]. We shall

[1] *Robert Browning*, p. 216.
[2] *National Review*, December 1902, p. 542.

do well, however, to bear in mind Mr. Chesterton's wise warning that 'it is exceedingly dangerous to say that anything in Browning is irrelevant or unnecessary'[1]. It is obvious, to begin with, that the very frivolity and pettifogging ingenuity of these pleadings set in strong relief the grave and thoughtful thoroughness of the monologue which follows. They are also designed to give a relief to the reader—a relief much needed after the two central monologues of the poem and before the Pope's pronouncement: if they in fact give that relief[2], their insertion is so far justified. Readers often skip or merely sample Books VIII. and IX. for the very insufficient reason that they have been told that 'they are not poetry'. In these Books, wrote Mr. Stopford Brooke, 'there is wit in its finest brilliancy, analysis in its keenest veracity'; 'but', he adds, 'they are scarcely a poet's work'[3]. It is a mistake, which Mr. Brooke at any rate would have advised no reader to make, to refuse the relief which the brilliant wit and the keen analysis offer just because they offer it in speeches which according to accepted definitions are not poetry; that reason for refusing it, if valid, is equally valid for skipping, say, the Falstaff scenes in *Henry IV.* The two speeches are excellent reading, and even more so now than they were when it was usual to speak slightingly of them. For now, thanks to Professor Hodell, we can at the cost of a shilling compare them with the actual pleadings upon which they are based; and the comparison greatly increases our enjoyment of the poet's amazing cleverness. It reveals his fidelity to his source flavoured by his own delicious irony, the brilliancy of a caricature which is generally true to the principles which makes the art of caricature legitimate[4], the felicity of his exposure of the feeblenesses which 'the insuperable

[1] *Browning*, p. 160.

[2] It is true that they have not given it to some readers; thus Mrs. Woods, though she can enjoy Arcangeli, commends the 'general practice' which, she says, 'has long suppressed Doctor Bottinius' (T. H. Ward's *English Poets*, v. p. 8). Even Lord Morley, in his masterly eulogy of the poem on its first appearance, said that 'we may perhaps yawn over the intermingled Latin and law of Arcangeli'. —A reader of the Yellow Book will often yawn as he reads it; but, when after doing so he turns to the poem, he will neither yawn over Arcangeli nor suppress Bottinius.

[3] *Browning*, p. 397.

[4] See further in the Introduction to Book IX.

learning'[1] of the pleaders varnishes over in vain. Nor should it be forgotten that these speeches were necessary to Browning's plan. He determined that whatever his fancy might add he would give his readers all the facts and would show how they were mirrored in the minds of the *dramatis personæ*. He tells us, therefore, what they all had to say about them—the hero, the heroine, the villain, the man in the street, the man in the market-place, society in the *salon*, the Pope in the Vatican; had he omitted to tell us what the lawyers had to say, his design would have been imperfectly fulfilled; we should have had a *cause célèbre* with the *cause* left out. One 'facet-flash of the revolving year'[2] would be missing; one constituent—for the purpose of the poem a most important constituent—of papal Rome would be ignored; the poem would have lost variety and colour.—It was probably a grudging recognition of all this that made a critic suggest that it was indeed right to give us a speech by a lawyer, but that we should have been given only one. Not a felicitous suggestion! The monologue-scheme of the poem means *audi alteram partem*. If you listen to Half-Rome, you must listen to The Other Half-Rome; if to Caponsacchi, to Guido; if to Arcangeli, to Bottini. The inclusion of two law-pleadings may be further justified, if further justification is needed, by the fact that, though the two have much resemblance, the poet has most skilfully differentiated both the pleadings and the pleaders[3].

If, as I have argued, Books VIII. and IX. are excellent reading and necessary parts of the poem, it would be a mistake to pass them by; but a notice warning certain readers away has been posted by Sir Frederic Kenyon at the entrance to Book VIII. 'This Book', he says, 'is so full of Latin, and the humour of it turns so much upon Latin phrases, as hardly to repay the trouble of reading to any one who is not acquainted with that language'[4]. The notice, like many other warning notices, should, I think, be disregarded—even by a reader whose

[1] *O.Y.B.* cl., *E.L.* 154. 'There is no memory of more learned arguments', says the author of the post-Browning pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* 223, *E.L.* 278).
[2] I. 1361.
[3] See the first paragraph of the Introduction to Book IX.
[4] So also F. Zampini-Salazar, *La Vita e le Opere di Roberto Browning, etc.*, p. 65.

acquaintance with Latin is of the slightest. It is almost cruel to penalize him for a gap in his education by heading him off, for instance, from Arcangeli's delightful asides, the humour of which, as of much else in the Book, does *not* turn upon Latin phrases; and of nearly all the Latin phrases Browning provides, word by word or phrase by phrase, a more or less literal translation: there is humour, it is true, in the translation which a Latinless reader may sometimes miss, but he will not miss it often. At the untranslated residuum he will not boggle, any more than he boggles when he reads

> And there he caught the younker tickling trout—
> Caught *in flagrante*—what's the Latin word?—
> *Delicto*—

which by the way is Tennyson [1] and not Browning. Meanwhile it is hoped that any difficulties of the kind which he may encounter will be removed by the following notes, many of which even he, perhaps, will pronounce unnecessary.

NOTES

(*N.B.—The numbering of the lines in the notes to this Book, after line 401, is that of the second and all subsequent editions of the poem, but not that of the first edition. See 'Lines Added' in Appendix XI.*)

1, 2. *Giacinto . . . Cinone.*] Arcangeli shows the wealth of Italian in terminations augmentative, diminutive, etc. by his large stock of pet names for his son, who is Cinone, Cinozzo, Cinoncello, Cinuolo, Cinicello, Cinino, Ciniccino, Cinucciatolo, Cinoncino, Cinarello, Cinotto, Giacintino, Cinuccino, Cintino, Cineruggiolo, Cinuccio, Cinuzzo. 'I do not know anything better done and more amusingly', says Mr. Stopford Brooke (*Browning*, p. 405), 'than this man and his household—a paternal creature, full of his boys and their studies, making us, in his garrulous pleasure, at home with them. . . . Browning was so fond of this sketch that he drew him and his boys over again in the epilogue' (see XII. 289-390). Mr. Brooke would have been even more amused, and more at home with Arcangeli and his offspring, if he had realized that the score of names is lavished by the fond Italian father on an 'only son' (I. 1145).

7. Quies *me* cum subjunctivo.] That he realizes that under certain circumstances the relative *qui* should be followed by a subjunctive shows that he is getting on.

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[1] *Walking to the Mail.*

8. *chews Corderius.*] Maturin Cordier, Calvin's schoolmaster, wrote excellent Latin school-books— *Principia Latine loquendi scribendique* and *Colloquia Scholastica* which held the field for more than two centuries. In Arcangeli's days English as well as Roman pedagogues 'taught Corderius' (Macaulay, *History*, c. vi.); Frank Esmond, Giacinto's less industrious contemporary, loved marbles and play and hunting 'a good deal better than Corderius' (*Esmond*, i. 9); in 1736 Dr. Johnson recommended Corderius in his 'Scheme for the Classes of a Grammar School'; and even as late as 1831 'to give an hour every morning to our old friend Corderius' was Macaulay's advice to the unscholarly editor of Boswell (*Essays*, i. p. 171).

14. *Papinianian.*] Papinianus was minister under the Emperor Severus. A writer of the fourth century calls him *iuris asylum et doctrinae legalis thesaurus*; Gibbon (c. vi.) speaks of 'the superior reputation as a lawyer which he has preserved through every age of the Roman jurisprudence'. There are many citations from him in the records.

36. *my Orvieto.*] See note on IV. 206.

39. *smell-feasts.*] Among passages quoted for this word in *N.E.D.* is the following from L'Estrange (A.D. 1692), *Fables*, 33: 'The Fly is an intruder and a common smell-feast upon other people's trenchers'.

43. *galligaskin*], *i.e.* 'gaiter'. The etymology of the word is elaborately explained in the *N.E.D.*

45. *in snug Condotti.*] The Via Condotti connects the Piazza di Spagna with the Corso.

46. *to crush cup.*] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, 1. 2. 86, 'Come and crush a cup of wine'. You crush a cup, as you 'crack' a bottle, to get at its contents.

49. *chambering and wantonness.*] Romans xiii. 13.

58. *Nutshell and naught.*] Says Horace (Flaccus), *Sat.* 2. 5. 36: 'A man shall pluck out my eyes before I'll let him rob you of a nutshell' (*cassa nuce*).

65. *dumple.*] This very rare word is used for its assonance with 'dimple' rather, perhaps, than with any regard for its precise meaning. See note on IX. 1039.

68. *Argument the First.*] Much of Browning's Book VIII. is based on the real Arcangeli's Pamphlet 1 in *O.Y.B.*, but the poet borrows largely from other pleadings for the accused. Note that 'in this case, which as a matter of course follows the Civil Law, the Roman practice is followed' (Hodell: *O.Y.B.* 323); it is opened by the defence. See however note on I. 165.

74. *bachelor Bottinius.*] See Introduction to Book IX.

78. *Verges on Virgil.*] Cf. 473-4. Giacinto is 'long since out of Caesar', doesn't 'trip in Eutropius' (XII. 357-8), and 'shall attack me Terence with the dawn' (VIII. 137); but he mismanages

his prepositions (VIII. 963), and last year, misled by *scripsi* from *scribere*, he made *bipsi* the perfect of *bibere* (VIII. 1772).

89. *no Solomon, etc.*] Matthew vi. 29.

95. *when they made him Fisc.*] His appointment was recent (cf. 232-3 below); when the Fisc prosecuted Pompilia and Caponsacchi in the summer of 1697 he did not hold it.

101. *the* Pro Milone.] When Milo was prosecuted for the murder of Clodius Cicero spoke ineffectively in his defence; the famous extant speech 'For Milo' was *written* by the orator when the trial was over.

115. *Hortensius*], the orator, Cicero's famous rival.

117. *the* Est-est.] The lower church of San Flaviano at Montefiascone 'contains a Gothic tomb in front of the high-altar, with the inscription, on a separate slab in front of it,—

EST . EST . EST . PR(*opter*) NIM(*ium*)—EST HIC
IO(*annes*) DE VC DO(*minus*)—MEVS MORTVS EST.

The inscription is said to have been composed by a valet who preceded his master when travelling in order to test the wines at the various stopping-places. On the doors of the hostelries where the best wine was to be had he inscribed the word "Est", and when he reached the inn at Montefiascone ("bottle mountain") he wrote the "Est" three times on the door, with the result that his master never got any further' (Baedeker, *Central Italy*, p. 110). 'In the northern portion of the Roman States the richest and most esteemed wine is the famous *Est*' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 323).

130. Duxit in uxorem.] *Duxit uxorem* would be 'commonplace'; *in uxorem duxit*, which is *not* 'Latin due', is Gambi's phrase (*O.Y.B.* lxi.); Arcangeli's own phrase in Pamphlet I (*nupserat Pompilia* see below) is perhaps still worse Latin.

131. Tædas jugales iniit.] Catullus (64. 302) has *taedas celebrare iugales*.

133. Connubio stabili sibi junxit.] Virgil (*Æn.* 1. 73) has *conubio iungam stabili*.'

137. *He shall attack me Terence.*] As Dr. Berdoe explains 'His son shall attack him with Terence' it is perhaps worth while to point out that 'me' is the so-called 'ethical dative', as 'you' in 397.

141-5.] *O.Y.B.* ix., *E.L.* 11.

142. sinistris avibus], *i.e.* owls, as Browning says. Cf. Lucan, 5. 396 *bubone sinistro*; Ovid, *Met.* 5. 549-50:

venturi nuntia luctus,
Ignavus bubo, dirum mortalibus omen.

148. *Farinacci.*] This eminent Roman jurist (A.D. 1544-1613) is very often cited by the lawyers in the Old Yellow Book. He was appointed by Pope Clement VIII. to defend Shelley's Beatrice

Cenci when put on trial in 1599 for the murder of her father, and he defended her on the ground on which Guido was defended, that of outraged honour: there is an interesting allusion to the case of Beatrice in *O.Y.B.* cii. (*E.L.* 110). Sir Walter Scott makes a Scottish lawyer appeal to the authority of 'the illustrious Farinaceus' in his defence of Effie Deans in 1736 (*The Heart of Midlothian*, c. xxiii.). See further on Farinacci below, 328 note.

157. *when Bottini brings his charge.*] *O.Y.B.* lxxi., *E.L.* 77-8. On this letter see Appendix IV.

165. *have I thee on hip?*] Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, 1. 3. 47, 4. 1. 334. 'To have a person on the hip' (='to have the advantage over him') is commonly explained as a wrestler's phrase, but Dr. Johnson took it to be a metaphor from hunting, the hip of a deer being the part often attacked by dogs; his interpretation is strongly supported by *Othello*, 2. 1. 311-14.

166. *break Tully's pate*], *i.e.* break the rules of Ciceronian Latin. 'Break Priscian's head' is the usual phrase; see note on VI. 389.

168-72.] *O.Y.B.* clxxii., *E.L.* 179-80. Arcangeli is made to foretell the precise terms which Bottini will employ.

173. *Either.*] The corresponding 'or' is forgotten.

175-8.] From *O.Y.B.* civ., *E.L.* 112.

190. apices], the forms of the letters; Arcangeli thinks the word choicer than Bottini's *elementa*.

210. selopulo.] A barbarous word, said to be coined from the Italian *schioppo*.—The Latin used in this passage (194-210) is brought together from various passages in the pleadings; it is not always from the same hand.

212. *I had thought to own, etc.*] The real Arcangeli does in fact own to the travelling-sword only (*O.Y.B.* cxiv., *E.L.* 122); see Bottini's answer, *O.Y.B.* clxxxiii., *E.L.* 188.—Arcangeli's 'gird at the Fisc's Latin' (216) is Browning's invention.

219. *Tommati.*] See note on IV. 1308-16.

226.] Cf. X. 679.

248-9.] Dr. Johnson said of Foote the comedian: 'One species of wit he has in an eminent degree, that of escape. You drive him into a corner with both hands; but he's gone, Sir, when you think you have got him—*like an animal that jumps over your head*' (Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Everyman's Library, ii. p. 49).

253. *tenon*], *i.e.* fix securely.

257-8.] Browning seems to forget for the moment that he has spoken of Arcangeli's speech as the first pleading in the trial.

270. *Oh I was young, etc.*], *i.e.* I acquired the trick of fence when young (and still have it).

274. *Blunderbore.*] It will be remembered (or will have been forgotten) that Blunderbore was one of the victims of the resourcefulness of Jack the Giant-killer.

276. *Pedant and prig.*] Browning represents both Arcangeli

and Bottini as jealous of Spreti, 'mannikin and dandiprat', 'mere inch of cleverness', as Bottini is made to call him (XII. 437-8). Spreti gained much credit in the murder-trial; 'other pleadings', writes the author of the Secondary Source, 'were written in the defence with much erudition, especially by the Advocate of the Poor, who was a certain Monsignor Spreti' (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265). Browning makes Arcangeli speak of him as his junior professionally as well as in age, but Hodell gives reason for thinking that this is a mistake, and that the difference between the Advocate and the Procurator of the Poor was not one of rank. The 'advocate', according to an authority whom he quotes (*O.Y.B.* 323), was specially concerned with the law, the 'procurator' with the facts of a case[1].

283-6.] The real Arcangeli's first pleading was written in January (*O.Y.B.* x., *E.L.* 12), but Browning puts the composition of that of his Arcangeli a little later, for when it was written Carnival was already in full swing—the city was already 'a-swarm with strangers to amuse'. Carnival-time was, in strictness at any rate, the ten days before Ash Wednesday, and Ash Wednesday in 1698 was February 12, as is rightly implied in XI. 582-4; but in XII. 31 February 22 is wrongly spoken of as 'at our end of Carnival'.

311.] On questions relating to the use of torture in the case see Appendix VI.

328. *Farinacci, my Gamaliel erst.*] We have seen (note on 148) that Farinacci died in 1613. Arcangeli cannot, therefore, have sat at his feet.—The quotation which follows is not to be found in the Old Yellow Book; Professor Hodell has shown that Browning referred to Farinacci's *Variæ Quæstiones* and took it from there (*O.Y.B.* 335); see Appendix VI.

341, 343. *martyrs . . . confessors*], *martyres* and *confessores* in Farinacci.

349-54.] See *O.Y.B.* cxxv., 213; *E.L.* 133, 265.

354. *reclaim*], *i.e.* protest, like Latin *reclamare* and French *reclamer*. See the protest of Spreti in *O.Y.B.* cxxv., *E.L.* 133.

358. *the poet's word reversed.*] Virgil, *Georg.* 2. 458:

> O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,
> Agricolas!

('Ah, too fortunate the husbandmen, *if* they but knew their happiness!')

364. *his proper church.*] Cf. IV. 148, VII. 17.

366-80.] On this audacious theory, which Arcangeli says that he might have advanced but for Guido's 'full confession', see the

[1] This could hardly be inferred from the contents of the pleadings in the Yellow Book; but its technical correctness may perhaps be inferred from the file-titles which describe the pleadings of the Advocate of the Poor as 'Memorials of Law' and those of his colleague as 'Memorials of Fact and Law'.

scornful comment of Caponsacchi in VI. 1625-7. Guido himself is made to say (in XI. 1707 *seqq.*) that he would have thrown the guilt on Caponsacchi in another way, if only Pompilia had been 'found dead, as I left her dead'.

377.] John viii. 11.

382.] Matthew xx. 15.

385-97.] It would be unfair, says Arcangeli, to call upon a great alchemist to transmute brass into gold before your eyes; his demonstration might fail, by no fault of his own, through the faultiness of his apparatus ('a faulty pipkin's crack'). Let him prove his greatness in another way: by demonstrating that what he has changed the brass into is really gold.

If I had tried to transmute into gold before the Court, *i.e.* had tried to prove that Guido did not go to the villa to commit murder, but to pardon and forgive, I too should have failed through 'a faulty pipkin's crack', *i.e.* the disconcerting collapse of Guido and his associates, their 'full confession'. Let me prove my greatness otherwise: by showing that Guido's confessed deed was really golden, *i.e.* that it was no crime but righteously done, because done *honoris causa* (see line 425).

Browning originally wrote 'transmutable' in line 387, but in the second edition changed it to 'transmuted', which makes his meaning clearer.

407-19.] I don't know the source of all this.

407. *Bear pain no better!*] Bottini is made to express the same surprise in XII. 414-16. See Appendix VI.

424-5. Vindicatio . . . Honoris causa.] Even apart from their confessions the evidence against Guido and his associates was abundant and conclusive. Their lawyers therefore admitted the killing (with an occasional reservation as to Guido, not to be taken seriously—see *O.Y.B.* xxii., *E.L.* 22), but contended that their clients should be absolved from guilt, or at least could claim some relaxation of the murder-penalty, on the ground that their motive had been the vindication of Guido's honour. Whether vindication of honour, even if long postponed, was a good defence in law, whether Guido's honour had in fact 'had injury', whether, if so, its vindication was the motive of the killing, are the principal questions in dispute.

428. *misprision of the fact*], *i.e.* a mistaken belief that such injury was a fact. 'Misprision' is used in the same sense in X. 1271; the legal sense of the word in 'misprision of treason' is different.

442-55.] From Arcangeli's Pamphlet 1 (*O.Y.B.* xi., *E.L.* 13). He makes the same point again in Pamphlet 8 (*O.Y.B.* cxii., *E.L.* 120); cf. Spreti in Pamphlet 2 (*O.Y.B.* xxvi., *E.L.* 27).

472.] Virgil, *Æn.* I. 278-9 (he is speaking of the Roman Empire). A quotation from Virgil is adroitly introduced to prepare for the following aside.

475. Poscimur !] From Horace, *Od.* 1. 32. 1, 'I am called upon (for an ode)'.

476-846.] That injured honour requires vindication is argued at length (1) 'on the mere natural ground' that such vindication is claimed by 'bird and beast' and 'the very insects' (480-542); (2) 'on Heathen grounds'—it is claimed by pagan jurisprudence (550-79); (3) on the authority of 'Apostle and Evangelist and Saint', and even of 'our Lord Himself, made all of mansuetude' (580-683); (4) on that 'of Papal doctrine in our blaze of day' (684-727); and finally (5) on that of 'Civility', 'the acknowledged use and wont' (731-846).

482-7.] Cassiodorus (A.D. 480-575?) held high office under Theodoric, the first Gothic king of Italy, and under his grandson and successor. He has handed down to us 'in a shape diluted with the platitudes and false rhetoric of a scholar of the decadence' many of the maxims of Theodoric, which, in their original form, 'were assuredly full of manly sense and vigour' (Hodgkin, *Theodoric*, p. 168).

The Cassiodorized 'apt sentence' of Theodoric here noticed was quoted in the pleadings not by Arcangeli but by Spreti, who gives it in full (*O.Y.B.* xxvii.-viii., *E.L.* 28-9; cf. *O.Y.B.* cxxxvii., *E.L.* 142-3).

489. *when Aristotle doubts.*] *De Generatione Animalium*, 3. 10.

492. *copying King Solomon.*] The only passage, so far as I am aware, in the writings attributed to Solomon where the bee is 'taken as instance' is in the Septuagint version of Proverbs, c. vi., where it is an instance of wise *industry*; the passage is not in the Hebrew. After sending the sluggard to the ant the Septuagint sends him to the bee: ἢ πορεύθητι πρὸς τὴν μέλισσαν, καὶ μαθὲ ὡς ἐργατις ἐστὶ . . . . καίπερ οὖσα τῇ ῥώμῃ ἀσθενὴς τὴν σοφίαν τιμήσασα προήχθη.

496-501.] In the *Scaligerana* of Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609) the expression *castæ apes* is explained thus: *Les abeilles sentent si un homme a couché avec sa femme, indubitablement le lendemain s'il approche il est picqué* (Hodell, *O.Y.B.* 324).

497. castæ apes.] Bartholomew Anglicus (*c.* 1267) says of bees: 'They are not medlied with service of Venus, nother resolved with lechery, nother bruised with sorrow of birth of children' (*De Proprietatibus Rerum*, p. 122, ed. Steele); he follows Virgil (*Georg.* 4. 197-9) very closely.

502-7.] I cannot identify the passage quoted either in its original Greek or as 'Latinized'. If, as Dr. Berdoe supposes, 'the Idyllist' mentioned is Theocritus, Arcangeli's Latinizer must have misinterpreted the ἦχον ἀκούω of Idyl 27. 57.

511-18.] See note on I. 232.

522-31.] From Spreti's Pamphlet 9 (*O.Y.B.* cxxxvii., *E.L.* 142).

540. *Derogate*], in the unusual sense of 'act unworthily of his rank and dignity'; cf. *Cymbeline*, 2. 1. 47-52. The French *déroger* often has this meaning.

554-7.] Luke xxiii. 31. Arcangeli inverts the meaning of the passage to which he refers.

559. *whom our devils served for gods.*] Cf. *e.g.* 1 Corinthians x. 20, 'the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils'. Gibbon writes in his 15th chapter: 'It was imagined that they [the rebellious spirits who had been degraded from the rank of angels] had distributed among themselves the most important characters of polytheism, one dæmon assuming the name and attributes of Jupiter, another of Æsculapius, a third of Venus, and a fourth perhaps of Apollo'.

570-74.] Cf. I. 221 *seqq.*; *O.Y.B.* x., *E.L.* 12: 'This had been ratified in the laws of the Athenians and of Solon, that is to say, of the wisest legislators, and, what is more, in that rude age of Romulus, law 15. . . . and similarly in the laws of the 12 Tables'. There is an obvious slip over 'that fifteenth'. In the same connection reference is made to 'the Julian; the Cornelian; Gracchus' Law'.

The *Lex Julia de adulteriis* (18 B.C.) *enleva au mari le droit qu'il avait toujours eu jusque-là . . . de tuer sa femme surprise en flagrant délit d'adultère.*

580-683.] The argument here is drawn mostly from the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cl.-cli., *E.L.* 153-5).

597-600.] From Spreti, *O.Y.B.* cxxxvii., *E.L.* 142.

615.] Proverbs vi. 32-5.

639. *first in reputation now.*] For Carlo Maratta see note on III. 58-9.

640. *Samson in the sacred text.*] See Judges xiii. 5, xvi. 21-30. An effective retort to the argument here advanced is made in the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccxxiv.-v., *E.L.* 226).

663-7.] Referring to this argument, here taken word for word from the First Anonymous Pamphlet, the Pope pertinently asks 'when, where' did Christ say *Honorem meum nemini trado*? (X. 1982-7). The words are attributed (with 'glory' for 'honour') by Isaiah (xlii. 8) *to Jehovah*, and their irrelevance to the lawyer's purpose is sufficiently shown by their context: 'My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images'.

673-8.] The reference is to 1 Corinthians ix. 15. 'My glory' should be 'my boast' (*τὸ καύχημά μου*), and St. Paul's boast is that while preaching the gospel he has not lived 'of the gospel'!

680.] The comment of St. Ambrose, which Arcangeli 'can't quite recollect', is quoted by Spreti (*O.Y.B.* cxxxvii., *E.L.* 142): 'For who does not regard a bodily defect or a loss of patrimony more lightly than a defect of soul and a loss of reputation? (*lib.* 3. *offic. cap.* 4)'.

691. *soon to bask, etc.*] Guido's backers look to the Pope to support their 'Christian dogma'.

706-27.] This ingeniously bad argument was actually used by Arcangeli (*O.Y.B.* xiii., *E.L.* 14).

724. *those old ingrate Jews.*] Numbers xi. 5, 6: 'We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes'. Note how the reference prepares the way for the aside which follows; cf. above, 472.

736-7.] James iii. 3.

742-4.] See note on II. 1473.

743-4. *manners . . . make the man.*] William of Wykeham's motto.

752.] Psalm cxix. 9.

755-73.] From Spreti, *O.Y.B.* xxxi., *E.L.* 32; cf. Arcangeli, *O.Y.B.* xx., *E.L.* 21.

764-73.] See also the First Anonymous Pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* cxlviii., *E.L.* 151. The loss of family honour, proved by the 'cachinnation' ('Every one's face had become a mirror in which was reflected the image of the ridicule of his house'), so distressed the Abate that he very often 'felt impelled to throw himself into the river' and decided to leave Rome. Cf. V. 1366-73.

772. *sound-hearted.*] *Cordatis* wise, not sound-hearted.

783-801.] Again from Spreti (*O.Y.B.* cxxxiii., *E.L.* 139).

786. cornuti.] 'Cornuto' became practically an English synonym ('horned') for a cuckold in days when such words were more freely used. Cf. *e.g. Merry Wives of Windsor*, 3. 5. 71.

794. *he ran away.*] A mistranslation of *deliquit*, which means 'he transgressed' (cf. 1299 below), *i.e.* committed murder.

812. *Leonardus.*] *O.Y.B.* xxviii., cxxxiv., *E.L.* 29, 140. The case was decided by the 'Sacred Royal Court' of the kingdom of Naples (the two Sicilies) in 1617.

817. *with commodity*], *i.e.* at an advantage. Compare the use of 'commodity' throughout the Bastard's famous speech in *King John* (2. 1. 561-98) ending with—

> Since kings break faith upon commodity,
> Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee.

824. *Another fructuous example.*] *O.Y.B.* cxxxiv., *E.L.* 140. 'Fructuous' is a favourite Gallicism of Browning's; cf. *Old Pictures in Florence*, XXXIV., 'the fructuous and sterile eras'; *Ponte dell' Angelo, Venice*, line 43.

845-6.] Isaiah viii. 20, 'to the law and to the testimony'.

859. *But why, etc.*] Guido's lawyers are of course concerned to include the killing of Pietro and Violante in their defence on the plea of injured honour.

863. *votarist.*] See note on VII. 1596.

875-81.] *O.Y.B.* xix.-xx.; *E.L.* 20.

896.] Psalm lxix. 9, John ii. 17.

898-900.] In the *Iliad* (4. 35) Zeus tells Hera—not in 'joke', but in sore anger (*μέγ' ὀχθήσας*)—that, if she were to eat up Priam raw with his sons and all the Trojans, perhaps then she might appease her wrath. A scholiast on Persius (1. 4) quotes from a lost translation of the *Iliad* by a certain Labeo:

> Crudum manduces Priamum Priamique pisinnos.

906-61.] From Arcangeli's Pamphlet 1 (*O.Y.B.* xxii., *E.L.* 22).

946. undequaque], 'entirely', cf. 1689 below.

948. *In Valerius.*] Valerius Maximus (*c.* A.D. 25) in his *De Factis Dictisque Memorabilibus* (viii. c. 1 *ad fin.*). His comment is: *consideranter et mansuete populi Romani magistratus, sed Areopagitae non minus sapienter.*

963. *He mismanages.*] In the earlier editions 'How he manages', which hardly suits what follows.

965-71.] Browning was thinking of his own experience. His father 'taught his son from babyhood the words he wished him to remember by joining them to a grotesque rhyme; the child learnt all his Latin declensions in this way' (Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 12).

973. *just as Ovid found.*] See note on II. 1221.

986. *the Brazen Head.*] Roger Bacon (1214–94) was believed to have made a brazen head capable of speech. There were different versions of the legend; according to that followed by Browning here and by Byron in *Don Juan*, I., stanza 217—

> Now, like Friar Bacon's brazen head, I've spoken,
> 'Time is, Time was, Time's past'—,

the head, after uttering the words quoted, the time for consulting it having been neglected, tumbled from its stand and was shattered.

994. *go softly all their days.*] See note on II. 457.

999-1003.] For the argument see note on IV. 1528-40.

1003. ex incontinenti.] The expression *incontinenti* (not *ex incontinenti*) is often used in the pleadings (*e.g.* in *O.Y.B.* xiv., xv.), in contrast to *ex intervallo*, of killing a wife 'incontinently', at the moment when discovered in misconduct. Browning misuses it here.

1013.] In *O.Y.B.* cxevi. (*E.L.* 200) Bottini quotes Farinacci as saying that 'a father has the greatest power over a son and by ancient law could even kill him'; and proceeds to justify the extent of the *patria potestas* in the words quoted in 1017 *seqq.* Cf. *O.Y.B.* lxxvii., *E.L.* 84.

1032. *here we brush Bottini's breast*], *i.e.* come to close quarters with him.

1040. In plenitudine intellectus.] The phrase is Spreti's, but he uses it otherwise; the lawyers in *O.Y.B.* are polite.

1041-68.] The argument is again from Arcangeli's Pamphlet 1 (*O.Y.B.* xv.-xvii., *E.L.* 16-18).

1048.] The full stop placed at the end of this line in the later editions should of course be changed to a comma.

1054-5.] The source of the saying of the 'gaby' (originally 'rustic') is unknown to me.

1064. *the House of Convertites.*] See note on II. 1198.

1071-90.] The explanation of Guido's inactivity from December 24 to January 2 is of Browning's invention; compare what Guido is made to say in V. 1581 *seqq.* The date of his arrival in Rome is fixed by the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 211, *E.L.* 263).

1083. *the Sistine*], *i.e.* the Sistine chapel in the Vatican, founded by Pope Sixtus IV. (1471-84).

1084. *Camerlengo*] = chamberlain. The Cardinal Camerlengo ranks highest among the cardinals. An incident mentioned in X. 2060 (note) shows his importance on the death of a Pope.

1085-6. *the Hat And Rapier*], known as *lo stocco e il berretto* (cap with vizor).

1108-1455.] The question of the presence or absence of aggravating circumstances (*circumstantiæ aggravantes*, *circumstantiæ prav se ferentes rigorosam panam*, sometimes called *qualitates*) in Guido's crimes is introduced in Arcangeli's first pleading and much discussed throughout the trial. These 'qualities' are somewhat variously stated in different places (hence Browning speaks of 'five qualities of bad' in I. 169, but of six here). Arcangeli here deals with (1) the gathering of armed men (1119-56); (2) the alleged use of prohibited arms (1157-1249); (3) the place chosen for the murders (1250-1313); (4) the alleged use of disguise (1314-38); (5) the contention that Pompilia was under the control of the judge (1339-1371); (6) the treason (*læsa majestas*) alleged to be involved in the crime (1371-1455).

1122. Coadunatio armatorum.] For this, the usual phrase in the records, *conventicula* is sometimes substituted (*e.g.* in *O.Y.B.* xliv., *E.L.* 43).

1123-5.] Some of the pamphlets are addressed to the 'Lord Governor', but Browning had no warrant for supposing that the Governor of the moment was the Governor who is said (*O.Y.B.* lxiv., *E.L.* 68) to have made laws against *coadunatio armatorum.*

1141-2.] The Latin words quoted are used by Spreti in another connection (*O.Y.B.* xxxii., *E.L.* 32).

1146-52.] The illustration is used by Arcangeli in Pamphlet 8 (*O.Y.B.* cxx., *E.L.* 128): 'If, wishing to commit a theft, a man were to climb over the walls of a city, though he might have committed the former crime without climbing the walls (which Farinacci in his *Questions* shows to be a very serious offence), even so he is only punished by a simple penalty, namely that for theft, as being the thing principally in his mind'.

1164. *Pope Alexander*] the Eighth (1689-91), the immediate predecessor of Innocent XII. For his 'constitution' see *e.g. O.Y.B.* lxv., *E.L.* 69.

1166. *tines.*] A stag's antlers during the second year are unbranched stems, to which in each successive year a tine or branch is added. Cf. 'the stag's head with its grand twelve tines' in Browning's *Donald.*

1170. *the Genoese blade.*] See note on II. 147.

1180. *Means to an end.*] See *O.Y.B.* xlvi., *E.L.* 45: 'the carrying of arms is not prohibited *propter se*, but because of the pernicious end which follows it or may follow it'. See also below, 1322, and IX. 521 *seqq.*

1182. Furor ministrat arma.] Virgil, *Æn.* 1. 150 *furor arma ministrat*; quoted in this connection in the First Anonymous Pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* cl., *E.L.* 154.

1183-4. Unde mî lapidem . . . Unde sagittas?] Horace, *Sat.* 2. 7. 116; not quoted in the records.—Why does Browning write *mî* for *mihi*, which is necessary to the scansion in Horace, and would not make his own line more unmetrical?

1188. *that*], *i.e.* that we should have incurred your blame.

1192. *An unimportant sword and blunderbuss.*] See above, 212-15, note.

1193. *pollent in potency.*] Arcangeli says in Pamphlet 1 (*O.Y.B.* xvii., *E.L.* 17): 'The lover is powerful in strength (*viribus pollens*), never timid, and too prompt to resist, seeing that in the words of a witness in the Process of Flight he is called *Scapezzacollo* [*i.e.* cut-throat]'.

1194. amasius.] Plautus's word for 'a lover', perpetually used in the records.

1200-1201. plus non vitiat, *etc.*] I cannot identify the quotation; 'a medieval philosophic term', says Hodell (*O.Y.B.* 334).

1218-20.] Not quite consistent with what follows. According to the passage quoted from Spreti (see next note) Guido gave no orders to his associates about Pietro and Violante.

1221-5.] From Spreti, *O.Y.B.* xxxv., *E.L.* 34; cf. Arcangeli, *O.Y.B.* xxii., *E.L.* 22.

1223. dicam.] A misreading; *O.Y.B.* has *dictam*, agreeing with *uxorem*, 'his said wife'. Browning substitutes *dicam* as an apology for the barbarous *sfrisiandum.*

1228. *Panicollus.*] A mistake; should be 'Panimollus', a jurist often cited in the records.

1235. *in the Horatian satire.*] *Sat.* 1. 2. 46.

1240-43.] *O.Y.B.* xxix., *E.L.* 29.

1248. Objectum funditus corruit], 'the objection falls to the ground completely' ('flat you fall'): *O.Y.B.* xviii., *E.L.* 19.

1266-7.] *O.Y.B.* cxv., *E.L.* 123, and elsewhere. In one of the 'Summaries' the Fisc produced a *mandatum procuræ* (lawyers'

Latin for *procurationis*, 'proxy') made by Guido to Paolo (*O.Y.B.* clvii., *E.L.* 162). There was some dispute during the trial as to the extent of this *mandatum*.

1269. *commodious.*] Cf. 1327, where *commodius* 'with more ease'. See note on 817 above.

1283-92.] From Arcangeli's Pamphlet 1 (*O.Y.B.* xviii., *E.L.* 19).

1295-1301.] From Spreti, *O.Y.B.* xxxiv., *E.L.* 33.

1299. Ex justa via delinquens.] Here, as in 1223, Browning misquotes; *via* should be *ira*, and the meaning is 'one who transgresses from just *anger*'.

1308.] Matthew viii. 20.

1312-13.] There are many legends of the award of divine commendation to St. Thomas Aquinas for his writings, and it may be presumed that he conceived himself divinely bidden on some occasion to 'arise and write', but I have not discovered any reference to such an occasion.

1315. *that we changed our garb.*] See note on V. 1565, 'Donned the first rough and rural garb I found'.

1321. *I round thee in the ears.*] See note on IV. 600.

1331.] Acts ix. 25, 2 Corinthians xi. 32-3.

1335-6.] 2 Timothy iv. 13. The 'many' who held this opinion forgot that the apostle asked for the cloak he left at Troas some thirty years after his escape from Damascus.

1352. *going to see those bodies.*] Arcangeli took his eight-year-old to see the grisly sight in San Lorenzo church just as he sent him afterwards to see the executions in the Piazza del Popolo (XII. 333-7).

1355. *Tommati.*] See note on IV. 1308-16.

1379.] For the 'three pending suits' see IV. 1305-27, note. In two of the three Guido was the defendant; Arcangeli is therefore wrong in saying that the three suits were 'promoted by ourselves I' the main'.

1385. *to barbacue.*] 'Barbacue your whole hogs to your palate', says Charles Lamb in his *Dissertation upon Roast Pig*. The noun 'barbacue' is said to be used in the West Indies of a hog roasted whole.

1397.] Malachi iv. 2.

1398-1426.] For the appeal on Guido's behalf to the Pope, see note on III. 1471-7.

1399. *the tardy pack*], *i.e.* the lawyers and the judges.

1400. *Bell.*] Cf. Spenser, *Pastoral Eclogue*, line 21:

> Seemeth their leaders bell their bleating tunes
> In dolefull sound.

1402. *Unisonous.*] Coined, I think, by Browning; it occurs again in his *Reverie*: 'praise forth shall flow Unisonous in acclaim'. *Unisonus* might have been, but apparently was not, a Latin word.

1404.] *O.Y.B.* cxlvii., *una particolare Congregazione.*

1417-22.] 2 Samuel xii. 26-9. Joab had laid siege to Rabbah, and when its fall was imminent he sent messengers to David urging him 'to encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take the city and it be called after my name'.

1429.] Matthew viii. 14 and elsewhere. (Arcangeli should have said 'mother', not 'sister'.)

1432-3.] John ix. 21.

1453. *minim*], 'smallest part'; cf. XI. 1107, *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*, IV. The word is now rarely used except in its technical sense in music.

1460. *the intellectuals*], *i.e.* the mental powers. The expression occurs twice in the *Essays of Elia*; cf. 'his visuals' (power of seeing) in *Jochanan Hakkadosh.* For the Pope's (supposed) failing intellect see XII. 57.

1469. *all the times prescribed by Holy Writ.*] Ecclesiastes iii. 1-8.

1470-71.] Ecclesiastes xi. 1.

1472-1520.] Arcangeli sums up his long answer to the allegation of aggravating circumstances by the prosecution (1108-1455), and in doing so takes note of one such circumstance with which he has not dealt, viz. that Guido's accomplices were hired and maintained at his cost for many days (1500-20; *O.Y.B.* ccvii., *E.L.* 209). In the records both Arcangeli and Spreti deal with the point (*O.Y.B.* xvi., xxxiii.; *E.L.* 17, 32).

1475. *all and some.*] The phrase is as old as Chaucer's time (*Pardoner's Preamble*:

> First, I pronouncė whennės that I come,
> And thanne my bullės shewe I, alle and some),

and is very frequently used by Spenser as by Browning. (*Cf.* X. 1239, *Sordello*, I. 206, 'His crowd of feudatories, all and some'.)

1483. *we may with safety do*], *i.e.* not 'we may safely do', but 'we may do with such precautions as will ensure our safety'. See *e.g. O.Y.B.* xvi., *E.L.* 17: 'the taking of companions for the murders [is not an aggravating circumstance] because he could lawfully use the help of companions so as to be able to consult more safely for his honour by his wife's death'.

1485. *Put case.*] See note on V. 748.

1500-19.] The argument is Browning's own.

1509-12.] The story of Tobit, like that of Judith (IX. 569), was made familiar to Italians by works of art, in which Raphael and the dog figure.

1519. Haud passibus æquis.] Virgil, *Æn.* 2. 724 (with *non* for *haud*, which would spoil the metre; cf. note on IX. 1333-5).

1529. *the poor man's advocate.*] See note on I. 178-9.

1530-37.] From Spreti, *O.Y.B.* cxxxix., *E.L.* 144.

1542. *Castrensis, Butringarius.*] Paolo de Castro and Giacomo

Butrigari, jurists of the 15th and 14th centuries respectively. The 'refulgent case' here mentioned is cited by Spreti, *O.Y.B.* xxxvi., *E.L.* 35.

1559. tenenda cordi], 'to be kept in *mind*'; '*heart* should hold' is a mistranslation (see note on 772 above).

1560-76.] From Arcangeli, Pamphlet 3 (*O.Y.B.* xli.-xliv., *E.L.* 41-3), where the opinion of Castrensis on the technical point here raised is cited with strong approval.

1579-83.] These points are discussed by Spreti, *O.Y.B.* xxxix., *E.L.* 37. See note on X. 964.

1590-1601.] This incident is mentioned in the Secondary Source only (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265): '[they confessed under torture] that they had planned to kill Franceschini himself and to rob him of his money, because he had not kept his word to pay them as soon as they left Rome'. See the comments of the Pope (X. 858-868, 952-64) and of Guido (XI. 1735-49).

1602.] This fact is not mentioned by the Fisc or any one else in the records; see last note.

1603-31.] This amazing proof of 'their rectitude, Guido's integrity' is quite beyond the inventiveness of the real Arcangeli.

1626. *in Ovid's phrase.*] *Met.* 1, 138-40:

> itum est in viscera terræ,
> Quasque recondiderat Stygiisque admoverat umbris
> Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum.

1636-1736.] The 'peroration' is that of Arcangeli's Pamphlet 8 (*O.Y.B.* cxxii.-iii., *E.L.* 130).

1684. *Lucretia's self.*] Cf. IX. 180.

1689. undequaque], 'entirely', as in 946 above.

1719. *I round you in the ears.*] See 1321 above, and note on IV. 600.

1734. *Mannaia.*] See XI. 180-258 for an elaborate description of this Italian precursor of the guillotine.

1738-42.] The famous Leviathan-passage in Job (c. xli.) is used three times in *The Ring and the Book*: (1) by Guido in V. 1504-5, where the cunning of the Comparini, the lies of Violante, and the bold carriage of Caponsacchi are represented as a threefold cord which lands Guido; (2) by the Pope in X. 1102-11, where the Church is said to err in trying to land such 'kings of pride' as Caponsacchi; (3) by Arcangeli here, where the 'king of pride' is the miracle of a speech which the speaker lands and strands.

I quote, with Canon Driver's explanations, the part of the passage which Browning uses here. 'Canst thou draw out leviathan [*i.e.* the crocodile] with a fish-hook? Canst thou put a rope into his nose? Or pierce his jaw through with a hook [not, as in *A.V.*, thorn]? [*i.e.* Can the crocodile, if caught, be strung afterwards on a line, to keep it fresh in the water, like ordinary

fish ?]. . . . Wilt thou play with him as with a bird ? Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens ? [*i.e.* Will the crocodile allow itself to be made a pet of ?]'

1745-9.] Cf. IX. 1577-9.

1769. *red rosolio.*] A cordial made in Italy with spirits, raisins, and sugar. *N.E.D.* derives the word from *ros solis.*

1770-72.] See note on 78 above.

1782-3.] Matthew xxv. 27.

1785. *by Agur's wish.*] The quotation is from Proverbs xxx. 8 ; the chapter is headed 'The words of Agur'.

1792-6.] Cf. 27-34 above.

1805-7.] From Horace, *Epod.* 8. 13, 14, where of course we have *bacis* ('pearls') not *mammis* ('breasts'). Arcangeli is not always delicate ; cf. XII. 740-8.

1814. *for, lambkins, we must live !*] The good-living in prospect suggests to Arcangeli words used by Pistol, who looks forward, perhaps, to the 'profits which will accrue' to him as sutler in France (*Henry V.*, 2. 1. 133).

BOOK IX. JURIS DOCTOR JOHANNES-BAPTISTA BOTTINIUS

INTRODUCTION

The manner of advocacy in the ecclesiastical courts at Rome, as shown in the twelve pleadings of the Yellow Book, was practically uniform; if the poet was to give two sample-pleadings, as the plan of his poem required, some monotony was unavoidable. Both his advocates must ransack the authorities from Moses, Romulus, and Solon to Baldo, Bartolo, and Farinacci; both must be ready with 'Ovidian quip or Ciceronian crank'; both must 'ecclesiasticize' their argument; both must quote the Scriptures freely; both must be a little careless about the relevancy of the quotations. That the unavoidable monotony should be relieved by as much variety as the conditions permitted was naturally Browning's aim, and he attained it, with consummate skill, chiefly in two ways. Employing a device already employed in Books II. and III. he represented his two advocates as of different temperaments and as differently circumstanced. His Bottini is austere, deliberate, self-centred, his Arcangeli is expansive, discursive, debonair; the former is a rigid bachelor with no unprofessional cares or interests, the latter is not more a lawyer than a family man in whom concentration upon a case is interrupted by love of good living, domestic joys, a father's pride and ambition. The poet's second device was to assign his two pleadings to different stages of the trial, and to present them at different stages in their composition. His Arcangeli's pleading is 'Argument the

First '[1], his Bottini's is a final summing-up. Arcangeli shows us but 'a chick in egg', he produces a mere draft; he is interrupted in the drafting by extra-legal preoccupations necessitating asides; he finishes his draft, it is true, but he leaves it 'i' the rough'; it is not yet sufficiently emphasized, ecclesiasticized, latinized, Cicero-ized; there is still 'this to stick in' and 'that to throw out'[2]. Bottini, though he too may have to 'prune and pare'[3], spouts to an imagined audience a 'full-grown speech'—

> no trace of worm it was,
> Or cabbage-bed it had production from[4].

For this second way of tempering monotony Browning took his cue from the records. The opening argument of Arcangeli in the Yellow Book was written, says the advocate, *currenti, ut aiunt, calamo,* 'with galloping pen'[5]; it shows clear signs of haste. Bottini's final pleading in Pamphlet 13[6], which the poet had chiefly in mind when he wrote his Book IX., is much better arranged and much more thorough and complete; parts of it may even almost deserve to be called, as Professor Hodell calls the whole, 'masterly'.

'In the monologue of Bottini', says the critic to whom I have just referred, Browning is far away 'from both the letter and the spirit of the real Bottini. The poet seems to have taken a distinctly hostile attitude towards this prosecutor of Guido, which mars the fairness of his judgment'[7]. Such a criticism of a caricature is perhaps too solemn; the caricature is so clever and so diverting that the reader will condone the flavouring spice of malice; but it must be granted that in Book IX. Browning did not always bear in mind the principle of his method, and, further, that he claimed from Bottini something which it was hardly reasonable to claim.

The method adopted in *The Ring and the Book* required that the speakers should be allowed to say substantially what they would have chosen to say, and Browning

[1] VIII. 68. [2] VIII. 1737-54.
[3] IX. 1577. [4] I. 1167-71.
[5] *O.Y.B.* xxiii., *E.L.* 23. Arcangeli speaks of the *temporis angustia, quæ non passa est alia fundamenta cumulare.*
[6] The pleading numbered 13 in *O.Y.B.* and *E.L.* is certainly later in date than that numbered 14 (also by Bottini; see Appendix VI.). [7] *O.Y.B.* 272-3.

guaranteed that they would say in his poem what they said in fact. His Bottini, at any rate, does not always do this. Many of the real Bottini's arguments were, as we shall see, more ingenious than sound sometimes, indeed, they were absurd—, but they were not so ingeniously absurd as some of those of the Browningized Bottini. We are promised, in the poet's metaphor, a sight of the varying aspects of the revolving year[1], but he modifies the colours of this particular aspect.—'The anger of the poet', says Mr. Hodell, 'probably arose from Bottini's treatment of Pompilia'. For 'anger' I should prefer to substitute 'half-humorous contempt': but, whether Browning was angry with the advocate or only despised him and laughed at him, Bottini's treatment of Pompilia was at any rate one of the causes of Browning's treatment of Bottini, and this treatment, I agree, was not quite fair. The prosecutor of Guido was not concerned, as the poet makes him say that he was concerned, to 'saint' Pompilia[2]; his business was to prove that Guido deserved death. To prove that Pompilia was blameless would have helped to that end, but to ground the case for Guido's condemnation entirely upon her blamelessness would have been a blunder. Bottini might rightly think that the vindication of the law would be more complete if the condemnation was obtained on other grounds; and an attempt to obtain it on this ground might well have failed. Suspicious circumstances attended Pompilia's flight; misconduct, though by no means proved against her, had been so far credited by the judges in the previous trial that Caponsacchi at any rate had been penalized; her own evidence was contradicted on certain points by Caponsacchi himself and by other witnesses; on one point it was self-contradictory[3]. We may allow, we must allow, that Bottini—the real Bottini—admitted, in fact or for the sake of argument, far too much against her, and that he failed to make points which would have told in her favour; but if he had insisted on her absolute truth and innocence and had based his case thereon he might have let a villain through the meshes of the law and cheated *mannaia* of its due.

If, however, in this Book IX. Browning is neither quite

[1] I. 1361. [2] XII. 710. [3] See Appendices IV. and V.

true to the principle of his method nor quite fair to Bottini, his caricature is not only, as has been said, very clever and diverting, but it observes the canons of the caricaturist's art. It exposes real absurdities and abnormalities, exaggerating them with a true regard to what makes them abnormal and absurd. The damaging admissions of the Bottini of the Yellow Book were often unnecessary and sometimes preposterous; they may in many cases be fairly attributed, as the poet attributes them, to the vanity of an advocate who is confident that his eloquence can 'smoothen good and evil to one'[1]; who deliberately puts himself into tight places that he may show how dexterously he can wriggle out of them; who is over-ready to find something 'to excuse, reason away and show his skill about'[2]; who will accept

> Anything, anything to let the wheels
> Of argument run glibly to their goal[3].

It takes one's breath away at times, after laughing at some ingeniously absurd argument in Book IX., to find on turning to the records that, as the notes will show, it is not caricature at all, but faithful photography.

Browning must have enjoyed himself greatly as he wrote this brilliant piece, and it is strange that the enjoyment of the writer should not be shared by some of his readers[4]; but for all his wit and fun he had a most serious purpose at the back of his mind. He wrote his Book IX. under the inspiration of the Comic Muse, but like the Augustinian preacher, his mouthpiece in Book XII., he was obsessed by the tragic thought how perverse, how false, how cruel human judgments often are, how utterly men fail to recognize the highest when they see it. That thought is a dominant *motif* throughout the poem, and the pity of it is enhanced when the perversity and the falseness and the cruelty and the failure are found in 'law, appointed to defend the just' and to clear 'pearl-pure fames'[5]. In what the Augustinian calls Bottini's 'best defence' for Pompilia—I have suggested above that it

[1] I. 1179-81. [2] IX. 1441-2. [3] IX. 469-72.
[4] See Introduction to Book VIII. [5] XII. 555, 580.

was not really his business to defend her—he did not, says the preacher, merely show

> The inadequacy and inaptitude
> Of that self-same machine, that very law
> Man vaunts, devised to dissipate the gloom,
> Rescue the drowning orb from calumny [1];

his best defence was itself a calumny.[2]

NOTES

(*N.B.—The numbering of the lines in the notes to this Book, after line 49, is that of the second and all subsequent editions, but not that of the first edition. See 'Lines Added' in Appendix XI.*)

13. *louts him low*], *i.e.* bows obsequiously. See note on VI. 439.

29. *girding loin and lighting lamp.*] See note on II. 318.

50. *be the phrase accorded me!*] Bottini affects to look down on artists and their concerns from a superior level; cf. 31, 77, 118.

56. *chalk a little stumped*], *i.e.* blurred by the instrument which artists call 'a stump'.

63. *clouted shoon.*] From Milton, *Comus*, 635.

91. E pluribus unum.] From Virgil, *Moretum*, 103, *color est e pluribus unus.*

97. *chyme.*] From χυμός, 'juice'; chyme is 'the form which food assumes after it has undergone the action of the stomach'.

109. *eximious*], *i.e.* excellent; 'common in the 17th century, the few examples in the 19th are humorously pedantic or bombastic' (*N.E.D.*). Cf. *Jochanan Hakkadosh*, lines 11-12:

> Our much-enlightened master, Israel's prop,
> Eximious Jochanan Ben Sabbathai.

112. *Capena*], *i.e.* the Porta Capena, by which the Via Appia enters the city.

114. *The Florentine.*] Michael Angelo.

115. *The Urbinate.*] Raphael.

116. *The Cortonese.*] Pietro (Berrettini) da Cortona (1597–1669).

117. *the accomplished Ciro Ferri.*] This forgotten artist, for whom and 'his master' see V. 488-9, died in 1689, so that the misgiving expressed in line 118 was justified.

119. *Phœbus plucks my ear!*] From Virgil, *Ecl.* 6. 3-4, *Cynthius* [=Phœbus] *aurem Vellit et admonuit*, imitated by Milton, *Lycidas*, 77.

143. *The rack.*] See Appendix VI.

[1] XII. 576 *seqq.*

[2] I have added this paragraph on the kind suggestion of a correspondent, Mr. Charles Williams.

144-7.] 'The lyrist' is Horace, who says that as the rack makes the reluctant witness confess, so wine makes the usually stiff and silent wit talk freely (*Od.* 3. 21. 13-14).

170. *Phryne*] was a famous Greek courtesan; the Venus Anadyomene of Apelles and the Cnidian Venus of Praxiteles are said to have represented her. The orator Hyperides was one of her lovers: his 'elegant defence' of her on a capital charge is highly praised in the treatise on *Sublimity* ascribed to Longinus. When the orator's eloquence had failed to convince the judges he bade her uncover her breast and so secured her acquittal.

170-71.] Cf. 175 and 576-7 below; Bottini 'entangles himself with his similitudes'.

172. *I prove this?*] 'Prove' is of course emphatic; see 160 above.

177-8], *i.e.* how he caught the slave who (according to his tale) had been preferred by Lucretia to her husband Collatinus. For Tarquin's 'deed of shame' see Livy 1. 58. 4.

189.] Luke vi. 44.

200-202.] I cannot discover where Browning found this pretty 'old conjecture'.

214-15.] I cannot trace the quotation; Hodell says that it was a 'medieval clerical saying'. A *clepsydra* was (1) a water-glass for measuring time, and (2) a period of time so measured. Pliny says (*Epp.* 2. 11. 14) that on a certain important occasion he spoke in court through sixteen *clepsydrae*, and that his speech lasted for nearly five hours.

217. *As Flaccus prompts.*] Horace (Flaccus) praises Homer because 'he always hastens to the issue and hurries his readers into the heart of the story, just as if they were familiar with it' (*A.P.* 148-9). No poet takes 'the epic plunge' more boldly than Browning.

225.] Suggested by *O.Y.B.* ccix., *E.L.* 211.

226. *the Teian.*] Anacreon of Teos; the quotations here and in 427-9 are from an ἐρωτικόν attributed to him.

φύσις κέρατα ταύροις
ὁπλὰς δ' ἔδωκεν ἵπποις,
ποδωκίην λαγῳοῖς,
λέουσι χάσμ' ὀδόντων,
τοῖς ἰχθύσιν τὸ νηκτόν,
τοῖς ὀρνέοις πέτασθαι,
τοῖς ἀνδράσιν φρόνημα.

γυναιξὶν οὐκ ἔτ' εἶχεν.
τί οὖν; δίδωσι κάλλος
ἀντ' ἀσπίδων ἁπασῶν,
ἀντ' ἐγχέων ἁπάντων·
νικᾷ δὲ καὶ σίδηρον
καὶ πῦρ καλή τις οὖσα.

It will be noticed that according to Anacreon here 'man's dower' is *thought*, the ἀνεμόεν φρόνημα which in Sophocles is that of man and woman alike; Bottini read into Anacreon what he found perhaps in Bion: μορφὰ θηλυτέραισι πέλει καλόν, ἀνέρι δ' ἀλκά, 'beauty is women's glory, a man's is *strength*'.

240-41. Discedunt nunc amores, etc.] I cannot identify the quotation.

243. *determined day.*] Cf. VI. 1199, 'the determined morning'.

249. Cohibita fuit, etc.] In the *O. Y. B.* (ix., *E. L.* 11) it is Arcangeli who says that Pompilia, when 'taken to Arezzo with her pseudo-parents, was restrained from living a too free life'. Bottini admits too much; see Introduction to this Book.

282.] Revelation xxi. 4, 5.

284-6. Novorum . . . Nascitur ordo!] Virgil ('the Mantuan'), *Ecl.* 4. 5-7 (with *saeclorum* for *novorum*). Of course he had no 'such purpose in his eye' as Bottini pretends to think.

289. *a passage in the Canticles.*] Song of Solomon ii. 11-13.

298-301.] Compare *My Last Duchess.*

307. *Put case.*] See note on V. 748.

—. *escapes*], *i.e.* escapades, peccadilloes; in *Aristophanes' Apology* Aristophanes says of the Greek gods that

> With kindly humanism they countenanced
> Our emulation of divine escapes.

Shakespeare gives the word a more sinister meaning, *e.g.* in *Titus Andronicus*, 4. 2. 113-14:

> *C.* Rome will despise her for this foul escape.
> *N.* The emperor, in his rage, will doom her death.

313. *olent.*] 'Redolent' notwithstanding, 'olent' is hardly an English word.

340. "Constans in levitate".] From Ovid, *Tristia*, 5. 8. 18 (he is speaking of Fortune):

> manet in nullo certa tenaxque loco;
> Sed modo læta manet, vultus modo sumit acerbos,
> Et tantum constans in levitate sua est.

342. *a levite.*] The term was freely used as a synonym for a deacon or subdeacon; cf. V. 740.

—. *bears the bell away*], *i.e.* is preferred, as the bell-wether of the flock; cf. *Hervé Riel*, XI., 'All that France saved from the fight whence England bore the bell'; *The Two Poets of Croisic*, IV., 'bore the bell away From some too-pampered son of fortune'; *George Bubb Dodington*, I.

347-8. "Crede non illum", etc.] From Horace, *Od.* 2. 4. 17-18 (adapted).

353-4.] The reference is perhaps to Leviticus xxi. 17-23, where, however, the Levites are not specially mentioned.

355. *uncandid*], *i.e.* impure; as in 475 ('her candid fame') 'candid'=pure, spotless.

359-66.] See 1 Samuel xxv.

368. Heu prisca fides!] From Virgil, *Æn.* 6. 878.

372-3.] The Pope himself uses sea-side similes in X. 486 *seqq.* and 1449-50.

380-81.] *O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92 (Deposition of Pompilia): 'He said that he wished to kill me. . . . He pointed a pistol at my breast. . . . If he did not kill me with arms, he might poison me'. Cf. V. 948-51.

394. *the right Comacchian*] from the Valle di Comacchio (N. of Ravenna) famous in Garibaldi's story:

> the lagoon
> Not land, nor water, where the great eels lie,
> The Valley of Comacchio.
> (Mrs. Hamilton King, *The Disciples*, p. 143.)

404. *lunes*], mad freaks. The word is often used by Shakespeare; cf. *e.g. Troilus and Cressida*, 2. 3. 139, where Agamemnon speaks of Achilles's 'pettish lunes, his ebbs, his flows'.

405. Insanit homo.] Horace, *Sat.* 2. 7. 117.

418. *truliest.*] See note on XII. 560.

427-9.] See note on 226 above.

435 *seqq.*] This argument is used by the author of the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (who may have been Bottini himself); see *O.Y.B.* ccxix., *E.L.* 221. For Bottini's damaging admissions see the Introduction to this Book.

453-6.] Persius argues in his *Prologue* (8-11) that hunger can make a man write poetry, just as it makes a parrot and a magpie speak:

> Quis expedivit psittaco suum χαῖρε,
> Picamque docuit nostra verba conari?
> Magister artis ingenique largitor
> Venter, negatas artifex sequi voces.

Between the first and the second of these lines a few MSS. insert

> Corvos quis olim concavum salutare?

which Browning accepts ('a crow salute the concave'). But the crow is out of place in the lines of Persius, and *concavum* (for which one MS. has *Caesarem*) cannot mean the vault of heaven; 'it would doubtless refer to the sound' (Conington).—This passage is suggested by the real Bottini's remark that, though the letter referred to in 459 *seqq.* may have been written by Pompilia, it does not prove that she could write at an earlier date; despair may have sharpened her wits (*O.Y.B.* clxxiii., *E.L.* 180). The ingenious reference to Persius is Browning's own.

459. *one letter*], viz. that alleged to have been written by Pompilia to the Comparini from the prison at Castelnuovo (*O.Y.B.* clv.-vi., *E.L.* 160). The letter is most important; see Appendix IV.

466-8.] Browning should not have made Bottini say this; for (1) the letter was put in 'for the Fisc', and not (like the love-

letters) by Guido's advocates, and (2) it cannot have been written before Pompilia's imprisonment at Castelnuovo, and therefore cannot have been prepared by Guido before the flight.

475. *candid.*] See note on 'uncandid' above (355).

476-7. *"my life, Not an hour's purchase"*], *la mia vita era a hore.*

513. *muckworms*], *i.e.* misers, money-grubbers. The word is applied to Lord Cottington, the self-seeking minister of Charles I., in *Strafford*, 1. 1. 63.

514.] Cf. IV. 310.

517. *the Samson.*] Judges xvi.

518. *permit the end, etc.*] Cf. VIII. 1137-9, 1180. That the end justifies the means is argued freely by both sides: by the prosecution chiefly, as here, to justify the love-letters; by the defence to dispose of the alleged 'aggravating circumstances'.

523-5.] From *O.Y.B.* clxxvii., *E.L.* 184.

529-36]. Moschus, *Idyl* 1. 3-5:—

> δραπετίδας ἐμός ἐστιν· ὁ μανυτὰς γέρας ἐξεῖ.
> μισθός τοι τὸ φίλαμα τὸ Κύπριδος· ἢν δ' ἀγάγῃς νιν,
> οὐ γυμνὸν τὸ φίλαμα, τὺ δ', ὦ ξένε, καὶ πλέον ἐξεῖς.

537.] 1 Corinthians x. 11.

538 *seqq.*] The real Bottini often employs this argument; *e.g.* in *O.Y.B.* lxxiii., lxxiv., clxxvii.-viii. (*E.L.* 80, 81, 184).

539. *else were hard explain.*] Note the two Browningisms—the (very common) omission of the relative as subject, and the (rare) omission of 'to' before infinitive after an adjective.

541. *He is Myrtillus, Amaryllis she.*] These and other lovers' names occur in the love-letters, in which the unsophisticated Pompilia, to whom, as the Pope says (X. 1020), 'it was not given to know much', is made to display a surprising knowledge of love-literature. See *O.Y.B.* xcvi., *E.L.* 104: 'I don't know what name to give myself, whether Vienna, or Amaryllis, or Dorinda, or Lilla; but I choose to call myself Ariadne . . . provided that you are not a Theseus, but a chaste Joseph, or a dear Narcissus, or an Ilago, or Fedone; . . . Adonis was compassionate with Venus, but I am not such as she, but truly a Medusa. . . . If you have read Tasso, etc.'. Dr. Berdoe explains that Amaryllis was 'the name of a countryman'!

548-50.] The story is told in *Odyssey* 4. 244-8; cf. Euripides, *Hec.* 239-41.

551. *boggled at.*] See 1379 below and VI. 282, note.

552. *clack-dish.*] A wooden dish with cover which beggars clatter when asking for alms. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, 3. 2. 135. Charles Lamb, in his *Complaint of the Decay of Beggars*, calls it a 'clap-dish'.

554. *beyond promises, etc.*], *i.e.* We praise her not only for making such promises, but also for keeping them.

564. *perdue.*] Cf. III. 1233, note.

569-76.] Works of art familiarized Italians with the story of Judith and Holophernes, as with that of Tobit (see note on VIII. 1509-12). It is used as an illustration three times in the records: by Bottini, as here (*O.Y.B.* lxxiii., *E.L.* 80); by Arcangeli, in a rather feeble rejoinder (*O.Y.B.* cviii., *E.L.* 116); by the Second Anonymous Pamphleteer in the same connection (*O.Y.B.* ccxx., *E.L.* 221).

576. *If I entangle me, etc.*] See note on 170-71.

582.] Horace, *Od.* 4. 2. 1-4. Icarus tried to fly with wings constructed by his father Dædalus, who fixed them on with wax, but he flew too near the sun; the wax melted and he fell into the sea.

597-8.] 1 Samuel xvii. 10: Goliath defies the armies of Israel.

602. *our Saint George.*] See note on III. 1065-6.

606-8.] Critics said of St. Paul that 'his letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak' (2 Corinthians x. 10).

609. *to oak'*], as believed to be specially liable to be struck by lightning (a classical tradition); cf. *Measure for Measure*, 2. 2. 115-17:

> Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt
> Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak
> Than the soft myrtle.

Tempest, 5. 1. 45; *Coriolanus*, 5. 3. 152-3. The belief is said to be justified by statistics.

619. *dreads a bear in every bush.*] *Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5. 1. 21-2:

> Or in the night, imagining some fear,
> How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

623-30.] Bottini, after his manner, argues about the opiate as Browning represents; see *O.Y.B.* clxxvii., *E.L.* 184. The same argument is used by Lamparelli (*O.Y.B.* cclii., *E.L.* 248-9): 'The insidious means by which the said Pompilia had recourse to flight, by preparing a sleeping-draught not only for her husband but for the whole household, beside the fact that it is not proved, would (so far as it is proved) be an argument for her sagacity rather than for her dishonour; for the wife would have been too fatuous if she had attempted flight without a precaution of this kind'.

624. *thwart*], cross-grained, as in *King Lear*, 1. 4. 305.

626. *Helen's nepenthe*], the drug which Helen gave to 'the much-enduring' Odysseus; see *Odyssey*, 4. 220-21:

> αὐτίκ' ἄρ' εἰς οἶνον βάλε φάρμακον, ἔνθεν ἔπινον,
> νηπενθές τ' ἄχολόν τε, κακῶν ἐπίληθον ἁπάντων,

('Straightway she cast into the wine whereof they were drinking a drug to soothe all sorrow and anger, to make men forget all their troubles').

646. Suis expensis, nemo militat.] 1 Corinthians ix. 7: 'who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?'

653. *were the fiction fact, etc.*] The argument is a fair burlesque; it was not actually used by Bottini. A long list of heavy valuables which Pompilia was charged with carrying off is given in the 'Sentence of the Criminal Court of Florence' (*O.Y.B.* vi., vii., *E.L.* 6). Pompilia said in her deposition (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv., *E.L.* 93): 'I took some little things of my own (*robbicciuole di mio uso*), a box with many trifles (*bagattelle*) in it, and some money, I don't know how much it was, from a strong-box (*sgrigno*). They were, too, my own, as appears from the note both of the things and of the money made by the Registrar of Castelnuovo'. With this Caponsacchi's deposition agrees.—If Pompilia walked alone, as Caponsacchi says (*O.Y.B.* lxxxix., *E.L.* 96), from Guido's house to the carriage, or even if, as she says, Caponsacchi walked with her, the things scheduled in the Sentence could hardly have been carried all the way by hand, especially as it was necessary 'to scale the walls of the city'.

657-8.] Dido's brother Pygmalion, King of Tyre, secretly murdered her rich husband Sychæus and appropriated his treasure. The ghost of Sychæus appeared to her in a dream, revealed to her her brother's crime, and told her where the stolen treasure would be found; with this as *auxilium viæ* she was to flee. She 'decamped with bag and baggage' accordingly, founded Carthage, and became its queen (Virgil, *Æn.* 1. 348-64).

659-719.] Some of this high-comedy paragraph (684-707) is based upon the records, which are full of arguments for and against the credibility of the driver's story about the kissing; the rest is caricature (note in particular the sly jest of 670-72). The caricature is richly deserved. One of the real Bottini's points is that kissing during the flight cannot be inferred from the offer of kisses in the love-letters, because these kisses were offered by Pompilia (if offered at all) to secure Caponsacchi's protection in her flight; such an offer, he assures the court on the authority of the law-books, 'begets no obligation' (*O.Y.B.* clxxix., *E.L.* 185)!—See Caponsacchi's comments on the driver's evidence in VI. 1694-1704.

713-14.] From Horace, *Od.* 1. 13. 15-16:

> oscula, quæ Venus
> Quinta parte sui nectaris imbuit.

Bottini's reference is careless; Horace meant by *oscula* not kisses but Lydia's lips.—By *quinta parte* he meant either the purest and best part, the quintessence, or a very large part. Perhaps by changing 'fifth' to 'third' Bottini implies that Pompilia's kisses would be even sweeter than Lydia's.

722-3.] Suggested by Horace, *A.P.* 142:

> Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes.

728-9.] Matthew xvi. 18.

732. *Nature—baffled she recurs.*] Horace, *Epp.* 1. 10. 24:

> Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret.

747-8. "Ut vidi" . . . "Ut perii".] From Virgil, *Ecl.* 8. 41.

760. *busy o'er a book.*] Livy's version of the story (25. 31. 9) is that Archimedes was killed while 'intent on some figures which he had described in the dust' (*intentum formis quas in pulvere descripserat*).

782-3.] From Cicero, *ad Fam.* 1. 9. 21: 'we ought not always to hold the same language, but we ought always to aim at the same end'. He is justifying an apparent political inconsistency.

790. *by.*] Here, as in 792, ='compared with'.

804. *in the Medicean mode*], *i.e.* like the famous Venus de' Medici.

809-10. *the epistle fraught With horrors*], *i.e.* the letter to the Abate Paolo, the contents of which are often summarized or expanded in the poem, *e.g.* in II. 684-725; see Appendix IV. Assume that Pompilia really wrote this letter, Browning makes his Bottini say —the real Bottini does not use the argument—, her subsequent denial, when she wished 'to repair the harm it worked', was 'a noble lie'.

815. *Put case.*] See note on V. 748.

832-5.] Immediately after Nero's accession at the age of seventeen, *cum de supplicio cuiusdam damnati, ut ex more subscriberet, admoneretur, 'Quam vellem', inquit, 'nescire litteras!'* (Suetonius, *Nero*, 10).

838. *O splendidly mendacious!*] From Horace, *Od.* 3. 11. 35-6:

> Splendide mendax et in omne virgo
> Nobilis ævum.

He is speaking of the one Danaid who was faithful to her husband.

861. *that commérce with souls.*] For (1) the verb, (2) the meaning, and (3) the pronunciation, cf. *Il Penseroso*, 39, 'looks commércing with the skies', a phrase which Browning quotes in *Fifine at the Fair*, cx. (end), and Tennyson, *Walking to the Mail*:

> commércing with himself
> He lost the sense that handles daily life.

Shakespeare does not, I think, use the verb, but he uses the noun freely of intercourse generally, and (in verse) he accents it on the second syllable (see *Hamlet*, 3. 1. 110, *Twelfth Night*, 3. 4. 191, *Troilus and Cressida*, 1. 3. 105).

868. *Shall a Vulcan clap, etc.*] See note on III. 1450-55.

871-7.] Many critics, ancient and modern, have rejected the passage, 'seeing scandal' in it. Others, including Mr. Gladstone, have regarded it as 'neither unworthy of Homer nor unlike him'.

The question of its authenticity is fully discussed in Dr. Merry's edition of the *Odyssey*, i. pp. 332-3.

877. *pickthank.*] The *N.E.D.* recognizes only the meaning 'one who "picks a thank", *i.e.* curries favour with another, esp. by informing against some one else'; the word is so used in *1 Henry IV.*, 3. 2. 25, and in *Rob Roy*, c. ix. In Browning it means no more than 'a meddler'; cf. *King Victor and King Charles*, Second Year, Part I.

891. *in the garb of truth.*] Horace, *Od.* 1. 24. 7, *nuda Veritas.*

893. *Thalassian-pure.*] Sir Frederic Kenyon and the *N.E.D.* explain 'pure as the sea' (θάλασσα); if this derivation is accepted I should prefer to say 'pure as a sea-nymph' ('some Thalassia', *Fifine at the Fair*, LXIX.). But the right explanation is probably that suggested in B. and H. Notes. Livy says that at the rape of the Sabine women one far more beautiful than the rest was seized by the companions of a certain Thalassius, and that when many asked, for whom were they taking her, they cried 'for Thalassius'; hence, he adds, the phrase has become 'nuptial' (1. 9. 12). Anyhow the use of the word *Thalassius* or *Thalassio* in marriage ceremonies is abundantly proved; see *e.g.* Catullus 61. 127. 'Some think that the god of virginity was called *Thalassio*' or *Thalassius* (Forbiger on Virgil, *Catal.* 5. 15); perhaps Browning took that view.

894. *catches at his sword.*] See note on II. 1031.

900-945.] This delightful passage, with its euphuisms and its confusion of metaphors, arrests attention. There might, says Bottini, have been an amicable interview, some gentility of apophthegm or captivating lyrical cadence from Guido, a smiling blush from Pompilia, and all would have been happily settled. But Guido preferred to settle things by violence, by the argument of the blow; Pompilia, like an obedient wife, accepted his alternative, returned him blow for blow, buffet ratiocinative. Guido, having got himself into a quagmire, preferred that Pompilia should not give him a hand to help him out, but should jump upon his head. She jumped accordingly, and he extricated himself by the rebound. For her jumping upon his head, or (to return to the other metaphor) flourishing the blade, proved to the crowd that she was innocent, and what could he want more? His honour, which, he had feared, was smirched, flashed brightly again in the public eye.

929-42.] So II. 1043-8; contrast with this Caponsacchi's account in VI. 1560-63.

930. *should be*], *i.e.* must be.

932. *our first stone.*] John viii. 7.

934. *misguidedly perhaps.*] See note on 1127 below.

939. *consult the place.*] John xx. 15.

968. *Hesione.*] Laomedon defrauded Apollo and Neptune of the reward he had promised them for building the walls of Troy.

In consequence of his fraud Troy was visited by a monster, and Laomedon, on the advice of an oracle, exposed his daughter Hesione for the monster to devour. Hercules promised to save her on certain terms; his terms were accepted and he saved her (Ovid, *Met.* 11. 211-15). Portia makes use of the Hesione legend in *The Merchant of Venice* (3. 2. 53-60).

972. *orc.*] Strictly a particular kind of whale; commonly used, as here, for a mythical monster.

985. *Jove, far at feast, etc.*] In the *Iliad* (1. 423-5) Thetis tells Achilles that she cannot plead with Zeus for him at the moment, because Zeus has gone far away for a fortnight's feasting with the 'unblamed' (ἀμύμονας) Æthiopians.

987. *I heard of thy regale.*] VIII. *passim.*

988. *Hercules spun wool.*] Hercules was afflicted with a sore disease. Warned by the oracle that he could only be cured if he served for wages for three years he became, first the servant, then the lover, of Omphale, queen of Lydia. To please her he spun wool and wore her garments, while she wore his lion-skin (Ovid, *Fasti*, 2. 305 *seqq.*). He did, however, rescue Hesione from the 'orc'.

992. *most*], *i.e.* greatest; cf. *Hervé Riel*, VI.

998. *sole anti-Fabius.*] The 'Fabian policy' of slow attrition in the Second Punic war was described by Ennius in the famous line (*unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem*) into which Bottini inserts a negative.

1004. *ranged Arezzo.*] Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, 1. 1. 33-34:

> Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
> Of the ranged empire fall!

Arezzo sympathized with Pompilia, but did not put itself out over her wrongs.

1018. Quid vetat?] Horace, *Sat.* 1. 1. 24-5, *ridentem dicere verum Quid vetat?* ('why shouldn't one tell the truth in jest?').

1030. "*Sepher Toldoth Yeschu*"], *i.e.* The Book of the Generations of Jesus; a Jewish attack upon Christianity which Voltaire assigned to the first century, but which probably dates from the thirteenth.

1034. *schismatic . . .*] Molinists, no doubt.

1039-40. *chop And change.*] Alliterative phrases, like the perpetually recurring 'chop and change', 'shade and shine', had a great attraction for Browning; cf. 'grub and grab', 'mop and mow', 'land and strand', 'glare and flare', 'guard and guide', 'clout and lout', 'roar and soar', 'pry and try', 'trip and skip', 'whir and stir', 'rhyme and chime', 'primly, trimly', 'drenched and quenched', 'cold and bold', 'drips and drops', 'round and sound', 'wags and brags', 'wrinkling and twinkling', 'dumple and dimple', 'tint and hint', 'rabble's brabble', 'wrangled,

brangled, jangled', 'battered and shattered and scattered'. See note on VIII. 65.

1068. *so plain a consequence*], *i.e.* an arrangement so plainly reasonable under the circumstances.

1089. *to*], *i.e.* as compared with.

1107. *the Merry-thought.*] The name really comes from the old custom of two unmarried persons, man and woman, each pulling one prong of the fowl's *furcula*; the one who broke off the longer (or was it the shorter ?) part would be married first.

1110. *his sole joke.*] Research failed to find it, and Mr. T. C. Snow, following up the clue given by 'The lion, lo! hath laughed', has shown why. There is *no* joke in Thucydides; Browning was misled by a scholiast, who wrote that certain critics, admiring the smoothness and clearness (*σαφήνεια*) of the historian's description of the conspiracy of Cylon (Thucydides, i. 126), said that 'the lion ἐγέλασεν here'. They meant that Thucydides must have smiled complacently at his own good workmanship not 'laughed' as Bottini says.

1116.] Romans xiii. 4, 'he [*i.e.* the secular ruler] beareth not the sword in vain'.

1118.] Luke x. 34.

1127. *Oh what refined expedients, etc.*] The real Arcangeli had argued that fear of Guido's violence would not have forced Pompilia into flight with Caponsacchi; there were many 'refined' alternatives. 'Preserving her matronly honour she would either have entered some monastery by the mediation of the Right Reverend Bishop, or she would have had recourse to the civil Governor; and he, after carefully examining all the circumstances, would either have provided for her a safe return to the city in the company of honourable men and women, or would have placed her with proper safeguards in the home of some honourable matron' (*O.Y.B.* cviii., *E.L.* 117). Considering the result of past applications to the Bishop and the Governor, Pompilia and Caponsacchi were well advised in not waiting for these dignitaries to 'examine all the circumstances'.

1135. *how neatly was it said.*] Bottini probably refers (rather inexactly) to *Œd. Col.* 1382, *Δίκη ξύνεδρος Ζηνὸς ἀρχαίοις νόμοις.*

1149. *of sword drawn and pistol cocked.*] See note on 380-81 above.

1166-7.] Matthew xix. 28. A characteristically ingenious citation in support of Bottini's conception of the joys of paradise.

1168.] Matthew xviii. 7.

1169. *leet-day*], *i.e.* court-day.

1173.] Matthew xxvi. 51-2 and elsewhere.

1197. *mollitious*] luxurious, voluptuous (formed from Latin *mollities*). Describing the palace where Frederick II. held 'his wickedest carouse' (*Sordello*, III. 129) Browning speaks of

mollitious alcoves gilt
Superb as Byzant domes.

1204. *thy wicked townsman.*] Pietro Aretino ; see note on X. 654.
1206.] See note on 539 above.
1212. *the holy house.*] See note on II. 1198.
1216.] Mark i. 45.
1218.] John v. 7.
1220.] Matthew ix. 5.
1225.] *domus pro carcere* ; see note on II. 1323.
1227. Redeunt Saturnia regna.] From 'the Pollio eclogue' of Virgil (*Ecl.* 4. 6), of which, here as elsewhere (284, 1227, 1376), Bottini makes audacious use.
—. *six weeks slip.*] A mistake ; see note on II. 1323.
1232-4.] Psalm lxviii. 13 ('the pots' is a mistranslation ; should be 'the sheepfolds'). 'To muc' (French *muer*, from Latin *mutare* with restriction of meaning)='to moult'.
1242.] Virgil, *Georg.* 1. 151-4.
1246. *doubtful, nay fantastic bruit.*] See II. 1368-72.
1268. *Tozzi.*] See XI. 2333, 2337 ; XII. 40.
1285. *colocynth*], κολοκυνθίς, 'bitter-apple', a strong cathartic. Cf. *Othello*, 1. 3. 355, 'the food that to him now is luscious as locusts shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida'.
1297-8.] Song of Solomon vii. 4, 'thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damascus'.
1299. "Forsan et haec olim"] *meminisse iuvabit* ('even these things, perhaps, it will one day be sweet to remember'), Virgil, *Æn.* 1. 203.
1312.] See below, 1338-40.
1321-2.] I cannot identify 'the sage' who said this.
1325-6. "filius est Quem nuptiæ demonstrant".] A legal 'text' commonly quoted in the form *Est pater ille quem nuptiæ demonstrant*, 'he is the father whom the marriage-rites point out as being so'. See V. 1468-70, 2027.
1333-5.] Virgil, *Ecl.* 3. 1-2. Bottini carelessly wrote *sed* for *verum*. Both words mean 'but', but if Virgil had written *sed* he would have made a bad false quantity. Cf. 1564 below.
1338-40.] Pompilia said in her deposition: 'When about a year had passed after the consummation of the marriage . . . my husband and also Beatrice his mother began to turn against me because I bore no children, saying that his house was dying out because of me' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiii., *E.L.* 91).
1345-7.] Virgil (Maro), *Georg.* 4. 554-8. The shepherd Aristæus had lost all his bees. At the bidding of his mother Cyrene he sacrificed four bulls and four heifers to the powers to whom the loss was due. Nine days later he saw a marvellous sight ; bees were humming in the carcasses and swarming from the bruised flanks.

1354. *steep horsehair certain weeks, etc.*] Browning follows Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 1. 2. 199-201 :—

> Much is breeding
> Which, like the courser's hair, hath yet but life,
> And not a serpent's poison.

The more widely spread superstition about generation from horse-hair relates to eels.

1358. *of Arezzo's self.*] In *Casa Guidi Windows*, Part I., Mrs. Browning describes a demonstration of the Tuscan cities in Florence. Representatives 'of every separate state in Tuscany' marched with their banners—Siena's she-wolf, Pisa's hare, Massa's golden and Pienza's silver lion, while 'Arezzo's steed pranced clear from bridle-hold'.

1362-6.] From Ovid, *Fasti*, 5. 241-2; the words are said by Juno in indignation at the birth of Minerva from the head of Jupiter.

1371. *last saint of our hierarchy.*] See note on VII. 30.

1376-7. Incipe . . . patrem.] From Virgil, *Ecl.* 4. 60 (adapted). See note on 1227 above.

1379. *boggle.*] See note on VI. 282.

1384-7.] Matthew xii. 44-5.

1392-3. *i' the simile Of Homer.*] Bottini refers to *Iliad* 5. 87-92 where the impetuosity of Diomede is described.

1401-3.] Cf. 949, 1271 above, 1408 below.

1403. *offuscated.*] As in *Christopher Smart*, IX. ('Beware lest fume offuscate sense'), Browning prefers 'offuscate' to 'obfuscate' (It. *offuscare*, Fr. *offusquer*). Alexander Hume (*c.* 1590) has 'offuskit'.

1407. "*What's this to Bacchus?*"] Greek tragedy had its origin in choruses which danced and recited in honour of Dionysus (Bacchus). As time went on its original purpose was more and more ignored, and conservative critics exclaimed *τί ταῦτα πρὸς Διόνυσον;* ('where does Bacchus come in?'); which phrase became proverbial.

1410.] Luke vi. 20.

1419. *as an eel, etc.*] With this simile compare XII. 410-13.

1421.] See the Second Anonymous Pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* ccxxiv., *E.L.* 225: 'Franceschini told his companions repeatedly to look and see if she was quite dead, and they, taking her by the hair and lifting her from the ground where she was lying, thought that she was dead, because the poor lady by natural instinct knew how to simulate it'.

1422. *for his sake.*] Explained by 1478-91 below.

1428.] Between this and the next line the 'snake' (Arcangeli) is supposed to hiss out its remonstrance, which Bottini proceeds to make articulate.

1429-40.] Bottini's meaning is clear, but his grammar is most perplexing. His meaning is: 'Arcangeli's objection (raised

against me, rather than against Pompilia) is that her tale, both in her death-bed confession and in her subsequent talks, contradicts mine. She admitted not a single peccadillo ; I have admitted many'. But his grammar ? (1) As the sentence stands it seems impossible to give a satisfactory meaning to the 'as' of line 1430, which is resumed (after the long prepositional clause introduced by 'in') by the 'as' of 1435. It cannot mean 'because', for then 'is found' (for 'were found') would be necessary in 1435. It cannot mean (what 'as' often means) 'as if', for this meaning would make nonsense of the passage; the context shows that Bottini admits that the two tales are at variance. (2) The 'in' which governs the prepositional clause of 1430-34 depends upon nothing. That clause is resumed by the 'this' of 1435, which is a nominative.—If Bottini, giving 'as' the meaning of 'because', had dropped the 'in' of 1430 and substituted 'is found' for 'were found' in 1435, he would have expressed his meaning grammatically ; he would, I think, have expressed it still better if he had also substituted 'that' for 'as' both in 1430 and in 1435.

1431.] For the confession and the subsequent talk see *O.Y.B.* lvii.-lx., *E.L.* 57-61.

1446. *that with this.*] Bottini's tale with Pompilia's.

1456-1505.] Bottini is made to argue thus: (1) if Pompilia's tale was mendacious, it was 'splendidly mendacious' (cf. 838); for it was told, not (or not only) to re-integrate her own fame, but to re-integrate Caponsacchi's, and it was told in the true interest of Guido (cf. 1422), who, if persuaded that he had killed a saint, might confess his sin and prepare penitently for death (1466-91); (2) Pompilia confessed and was absolved before the death-bed gossipry. Confession and absolution 'obliterate' sin. When she gossiped, therefore, she was sinless and might so describe herself.

Even if a casuist might accept these arguments as more or less exculpatory of Pompilia, they would, of course, have been a support to Guido's *honoris-causa* plea, and would have come more suitably, dressed up a little differently, from Guido's advocates. The first, indeed, was suggested to Browning by one of Arcangeli's pleadings (*O.Y.B.* cxii., *E.L.* 121), and the second by the pro-Guido First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cliii., *E.L.* 156): 'the alleged declaration made by the lady in the article of death (*in articolo di morte*) may be equivocal in itself, in the sense that after confession and sacramental absolution sin is cancelled as if it had never been committed'.

The real Bottini naturally argued throughout that death-bed confessions are true and are ordinarily accepted as true in the courts, while his opponents maintained that they are often false and that there are many precedents for rejecting them.

1482], *i.e.* that the murder was committed simply to avenge his outraged honour.

1494. *We come to our* Triarii, *last resource.*] Cf. *George Bubb Dodington,* VII. :

> *Ventum est ad triarios ;* last resource.

After explaining that the *triarii* were the reserve of the old Rome army Livy adds (8. 8. 8-11): *inde rem ad triarios redisse proverbio increbuit* ('grew into a proverb').

1505. *of the act*], *i.e.* of absolution.

1506. Solvuntur tabulæ ? *etc.*] Horace, *Sat.* 2. 1. 86, *solventur risu tabulæ.* By *solvuntur tabulæ ?* Bottini means 'does the Court adjourn (amidst laughter) ?' Horace's *solventur tabulæ* means probably 'the case will break down', but the figure employed is uncertain.

1517. Decretum.] See note on VI. 2007-22.

1531-8.] From Bottini's argument in *O.Y.B.* clxvii., *E.L.* 175.

1542-3.] Horace, *Od.* 2. 10. 19-20, *neque semper arcum Tendit Apollo.*

1545-52.] Browning found this in the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* ccxxi., *E.L.* 223): 'The "title" of the case is just like the branch hung up outside the door of an inn, which no doubt means that wine is sold here, but by no manner of means shows that the wine sold is good, saleable, and pleasant'. The old custom of hanging an ivy bough before a vintner's door is mentioned by writers quoted in notes to the Epilogue of *As you like it,* to explain the proverb 'Good wine needs no bush'; it is still observed in Italy. The ivy was sacred to Bacchus.

1564. tenax proposito.] From Horace, *Od.* 3. 3. 1, but for *proposito* Bottini should have said *propositi.* See note on 1333-5 above.

1573. *That famed panegyric of Isocrates.*] A Panegyric (λόγος πανηγυρικός) was a speech written for a great public festival (πανήγυρις). The *Panegyric* of Isocrates, which an ancient critic called περιβόητος ('famed'), advocated an invasion of Persia (380 B.C.). It was said that the orator took more time in advising the invasion of that country than Alexander took in conquering all Asia, and Quintilian tells us that the composition of the speech occupied the orator ten years at the lowest estimate.

BOOK X.—THE POPE

INTRODUCTION

Of all the Books of the poem Book X. is often unhesitatingly pronounced to be the greatest[1]. The Pope's soliloquy, mellow with the experience of a long life of action and contemplation, is marked throughout by a rare dignity and elevation; its diction and its versification are on the same high level as its substance; the passages in which judgment is given on the speakers of Books VI. and VII. are hardly less noble than even the noblest parts of those great monologues; nothing in the poem is more finely conceived and phrased than the appeal which is put into the mouth of Euripides; apposite illustrations from nature, more frequent and elaborate here than elsewhere, are a conspicuous feature of the Pope's deliberate eloquence. The interest of the Book is moreover enhanced by the fact that 'here, if anywhere, Browning speaks for himself'. He speaks for himself in two ways. A comparison of Books I. and X. shows, what indeed is clear enough without it, that the Pope's interpretations of conduct and motive are Browning's interpretations; and it is not less certain that the theological reasonings of the monologue are for the most part Browning's reasonings. The interpretations and the reasonings occupy between them nearly all Book X., which is therefore in a sense Browning's own soliloquy.

That the Pope should pass judgment on Guido, Capon-

[1] So, for example, Signora Zampini-Salazar in her admirable study of *The Ring and the Book*: *non esito a considerarlo la parte più forte ed interessante dell' intero poema* (*La Vita e le Opere di R. B. ed E. B.-B.* p. 66).

sacchi, and the rest was of course the reason for his inclusion among the poet's nine speakers. So far as the story is concerned it was his one and only duty; in discharging it he is admirably sure, direct, trenchant; though in his awards of praise and blame he is Browning's mouthpiece, the anachronism thereby involved [1] is too slight to need defence. It is otherwise with the theological disquisitions. They are a manifest 'divagation'; the Pope treads in these bypaths uncertainly, his conclusions are often tentative; in large parts of his reasonings the anachronism is flagrant.

When Innocent has completed [2] his pronouncement on the actors of his drama, 'all and some', we expect him to proceed at once, or at any rate after a formal rejection of the claim of 'clericate', to give effect to that pronouncement by passing sentence on the actor with whom he is primarily concerned. The expectation is not fulfilled; sentence is deferred for some 800 lines. A deriding voice [3] lures the Pope from the straight path into long discussions on the ultimate basis of Christianity, the probable effects upon religion of an age of doubt, the ethics and theology of Euripides—discussions obviously unhelpful to him in his task, which indeed has already been practically completed. Mr. Stopford Brooke, who noted that they 'land him exactly at the point from which he set out', found them, as others have found them, 'wearisome', protested that 'we might have been spared all this' [4]; the theology seems to have struck him, as the invitation to introduce it struck the Pope [5], with a kind of chill in a poem so full of the 'incandescent vitality' of its author, so rich in the presentation of life alike in its outward aspects and in its passions, its crimes, its heroisms. Now you cannot prove to people who find a thing wearisome that it is on the contrary enlivening; but the introduction of theology into Book X. has a dramatic fitness, as a closer examination will presently show.

Meanwhile a candid reader will admit that the glaring anachronism to which I have referred is hard to justify. Theology, if you like, he will say, but this theology? It

[1] See *e.g.* note on X. 534-6. [2] At line 1252.
[3] X. 1265. [4] *Browning*, p. 411. [5] X. 1253.

is impossible theology for a seventeenth-century (indeed for any) pope, even for this 'strange Pope, a priest who thinks'[1]. It is Browning's theology and the arguments used in its support are Browning's characteristic arguments; so that those critics whose concern with the poet's poetry is to construct from it the theologian's theology have good warrant for quarrying a large part of their materials from what profess to be the utterances of a very different person. If, however, no sufficient *apologia* can be offered for the intrusion of Browning's theological reasonings into Book X., a kind of apologetic plea for their intrusion may perhaps be advanced; there is, it may fairly be submitted, a certain gain in their appearance in *The Ring and the Book*. In this his greatest poem we find those many sides of the many-sided master for which most of us care most, his amazingly accurate observation, his extensive and peculiar erudition, his robust humour, his lively wit, his vigorous swiftness, his wealth of imagination, his sure 'insight and outsight', his abiding sense of the pre-eminence of love. It is well that we should also find there the more purely intellectual Browning, that there should be a place in it for the characteristic arguments by which he worked so often to conclusions by which he set such store, that life is probation, that probation means sorrow and sin, that men must be judged by their aims and their efforts and not by their product, that the weakness of a faith may be its strength, that 'the growing religious intelligence walks best by a receding light'[2], that man's highest hope is based on his imperfection, that self-sacrificing love is an essential and a constant part of the perfection of God.

If no sufficient case can be made out for the injection of Browning's argumentative processes into Innocent's mind, a critic is on firm ground when he maintains that the Pope is represented rightly, and at just the right moment, as visited by blank misgivings and obstinate questionings about the whole ecclesiastical system which is bound up with Catholic theology. His investigation of the Guido-Pompilia tragedy has shown him that he moves in a world in which the ideal of that system is worlds

[1] Caponsacchi in VI. 478.

[2] See note on X. 1366.

away from realization, and it is most natural that a poignant apprehension that its foundations may be insecure should 'rap and knock and enter in his soul'[1].

We find in Book X. two most striking contrasts in the Pope's personality. One is the familiar contrast between the mere weak old man and the divinely-commissioned autocrat who wields 'the thunderbolts of Heaven'[2]. The other, and perhaps the more important, is between that autocrat and Antonio Pignatelli, the Pope's 'ancient self'. We start with Innocent as Pope, seeking for instruction from the chronicles of his predecessors. He lights upon an unpropitious passage. As he pores over the quaint and unedifying story of Formosus[3] a touch of humour colours his paraphrase of his document; but on reflection he

> Starts somewhat, solemnizes straight his smile[4],

for the story forces upon him a sceptical conclusion about the value of papal judgments—

> (Which of the judgments was infallible?
> Which of my predecessors spoke for God?)[5]—

he sets forth on his journey with ill omens. Yet no man, however sceptical intellectually, is invested with supreme authority, and *a fortiori* with authority deemed divine, without a certain resultant self-confidence, purely instinctive and illogical though it may be, and the Pope's figure seems suddenly to straighten itself—'Irresolute? Not I'[6]; as he enlarges on the theme of the weak old man condemning the strong man 'in the plenitude of life' it is the sense of his high authority that supports him all the time.—In lines 399-1252 he unravels the tangle of the story; before entering on the task he appeals for guidance to his shrewd pre-papal self. Much has he seen and known in the busy years when he was 'no pope so long', and that stored experience, aided by the intuitions of old age—

[1] *Bishop Blougram's Apology*.—The dramatic effect of the monologue is to a great extent lost by readers who take the view expressed *e.g.* by Mr. Sharp (*Life of Browning*, p. 126) that '*all* this section [Book X.] has a lofty serenity'.

[2] '. . . the Pope, so often but a weak old man. In a trembling hand are laid the thunderbolts of Heaven' (Gregorovius).

[3] Which might, perhaps, have been compressed. See note on X. 24-157.

[4] I. 1256. [5] X. 151-2. [6] X. 236.

> fires that more and more
> Visit a soul, in passage to the sky,
> Left nakeder than when flesh-robe was new—,

guides him as he investigates[1]. And yet for all his disavowal he still relies on his commission as Christ's Vicar; if he speaks and will act 'resolvedly' it is because, as he says a little later,

> I it is who have been appointed here
> To represent Thee, in my turn, on earth . . .
> Incomprehensibly the choice is Thine!
> I therefore bow my head and take Thy place[2].

One stark staring fact has, however, confronted him throughout, a fact most injurious to papal authority and to the pyramid of which it is the apex. The representatives of the Church have been discredited by his investigations –a point emphasized by the circumstance that it is only because the villain of the piece has claimed clerical privilege that the Pope has come in as investigator—, whereas the nobility and the heroism that have been brought to light have sprung from simple human virtue in characters either practically outside the Church's influence or unspoilt in spite of it. All this leads to the raising of the speculative question, Is the Christian revelation necessary for virtue or for the knowledge of God, does it not seem even to hamper? and to the doubt whether it might not be well that the Pope's world should be rudely shaken from its 'torpor of assurance'. Such misgivings present themselves inevitably to his mind, and his avowal of them adds immensely to the dramatic force of his soliloquy. As 'in the dim droop of the sombre February day' which reflects the winter of his disillusion and discontent[3] he avows his doubts, is forced to this or that disquieting admission, offers this or that tentative solution of a perplexity, the 'thrill' that chills most of us is not solely or chiefly caused, as it was caused in Mr. Brooke's case, by his introduction of 'irrelevant' theology. —But he ends this drama within a drama in another key.

[1] X. 383-98; cf. 1241 *seqq.*
[2] X. 1333-4, 1346-7.
[3] I. 1235-6; cf. X. 283-4 and especially 212-13:

> I have worn through this sombre wintry day,
> With winter in my soul beyond the world's.

'A voice quickens his spirit'; in pronouncing sentence he recaptures once again the unfaltering note of unquestioned authority[1].

It is a serious defect of the Yellow Book as the record of a trial in which the balance was, as Browning said, hard to strike that it contains neither summing-up nor verdict. Book X. fills the gap. It contains, the poet tells his readers, 'the ultimate judgment save yours'[2], and this judgment was no doubt in substance the judgment of the real Innocent; but in all its details it is Browning's only. For except as the recipient of conventional compliments the Pope is not prominent in the Yellow Book. We learn indeed from the First Anonymous Pamphlet that the Abate Paolo, seeing that the proceedings in the Process of Flight were protracted, addressed a memorial to the Holy Father, praying him to appoint a special Congregation to determine all the cases, civil and criminal, which had arisen out of the Guido-Pompilia marriage, and that the Pope refused[3]; but certain letters, written on the evening of the day of Guido's execution, to the Florentine Cencini were Browning's only authority for the later unsuccessful appeal, and they speak of it very briefly:—

> Judging it expedient not to postpone the execution of the sentence already determined His Holiness thought well, by a special decree under his signature, to deny all clerical privilege.[4]
>
> [Clerical privilege was claimed, but] the Pope signed the death-warrant yesterday and determined that it should be definitely executed to-day.[5]
>
> Last evening at two hours of the night [*i.e.* about 8 P.M.] my Lord signed the death-warrant, disallowing [?] the clericate.[6]

An account of the Innocent XII. of history, with whom Browning was intimately acquainted, will be found in Appendix VII.

[1] X. 2100, cf. 1956-8.—The finest and perhaps the most apposite part of the Pope's disquisitions is the appeal of Euripides; on this appeal and the Pope's answer see the note on X. 1670-1790. On his interesting allusions to the Molinists see Appendix VIII.

[2] I. 1220-21.

[3] *O.Y.B.* cxlvii., *E.L.* 150; cf. the Second Anonymous Pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* ccxxv., *E.L.* 226. See III. 1471 *seqq.*, and many passages in later Books.

[4] *O.Y.B.* ccxxxv., *E.L.* 235.

[5] *O.Y.B.* ccxxxvii., *E.L.* 237.

[6] *O.Y.B.* ccxxxix., *E.L.* 238.

NOTES

(*N.B.—The numbering of the lines in the notes to this Book, after line 92, is that of the second and all subsequent editions, but not that of the first. See 'Lines Added' in Appendix XI.*)

1. *Like to Ahasuerus.*] Esther vi. 1: 'On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king'. The reading, however, unlike that of Innocent, was of the records of *contemporary* events; Ahasuerus did not 'question' his predecessors and 'take instruction so'.

2. *these seven years now*], *i.e.* since he became Pope in 1691.

9.] Ecclesiastes xii. 12.

11. *Alexander last.*] Alexander VIII., his immediate predecessor.

14. *Suchanone.*] I am informed that in the Browning Society of a certain university-town 'Suchanoné' was taken for a proper name and that search was made for it in lists of the Popes!

16. *ill.*] See the second paragraph of Browning's *Cenciaja*, where he speaks, in a stinging parenthesis, of the multiplicity of records of

> injustice done by God
> In person of his Vicar-upon-earth.

23. *shall be stretched, etc.*] An allusion, perhaps, to the practice of placing in a Pope's coffin a parchment-register of his acts.

24-157.] The story of the trial of Pope Formosus (A.D. 891-6) was told with variations of detail by many chroniclers and is re-told in many modern books. Possibly, as has been suggested (Hall Griffin, pp. 20-23), Browning's interest in the story was due to his having read it as a boy in Wanley's *Wonders of the Little World*, but the allusions to it in that book (p. 477) are not particularly arresting.—Innocent was unfortunate in lighting on so unhelpful a chronicle. The trial was an incident in the quarrel of pro-German and anti-German imperialistic factions, and serves chiefly to illustrate the degradation of the papacy between the death of Nicholas I. (867) and the accession of Hildebrand (1073). In those two centuries there were more than fifty popes, many of whom died by violence.

32. *seventh of the name.*] He is generally known as Stephen VI. (A.D. 896-7). When Professor Hodell called Mr. R. B. Browning's attention to what he said was the poet's 'mistake' upon the point, Mr. Browning admitted that his father's memory 'was not at its best in dates and figures' (*O.Y.B.* 337). That is true, but the poet was justified in calling this Pope, as Wanley (see last note) calls him, Stephen VII. He is so called in the official list of the Roman

Curia, and the uncertainty between 'sixth' and 'seventh' is due to the fact that a Stephen, whom that list recognizes as Stephen II., is omitted in other lists because though elected Pope (in 752) he died a few days or months afterwards, in any case before consecration. See Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papstthums*, pp. 268-9.

39. *as embalmed.*] 'Before the time of Julius II. [1503–13] the bodies of the dead Popes were not opened and embalmed' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 517, where what was then the usage is minutely described).

40. *buried duly in the Vatican.*] St. Peter's has been the usual burial place of Popes except in two periods: (1) in the third, fourth, and early fifth centuries, when they were usually buried in the catacombs; and (2) in the eleventh and twelfth, when twelve Popes were buried in the Lateran. Some twenty rest in other cities of Italy, and the Popes of the 'Babylonish captivity' (1305–78) in France. Of about 265 Popes 'more than 150 are believed to lie in St. Peter's alone', but many of their tombs have disappeared; none survive from that period of degradation, the ninth and tenth centuries. See Gregorovius, *Tombs of the Popes*, especially chapter i.

89. ΙΧΘΥΣ], the initial letters of Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτήρ (Jesus Christ, son of God, Saviour) make up the Greek word for 'fish'. A fish is a common symbol both of Christ and of Christianity in the catacombs, and is often found in early Christian gems with other Christian symbols—the olive-branch, the pastoral staff, the anchor, the cross, the dove (see Westcott, *Religious Thought in the West*, p. 314).

91. *Fisherman.*] Because of the saying of Christ to Peter and Andrew, 'I will make you fishers of men' (Matthew iv. 19).

92. *Fisher's-signet.*] The Pope's *anello pescatorio* is so called from its seal, which is a representation of St. Peter fishing from his boat. Clement IV. (1265–8), who first mentions it, speaks of it as used by the Popes in their private correspondence. When a Pope is deposed, the ring is solemnly drawn from his finger; when a Pope dies, the ring is destroyed. The new Pope is presented with another, on which his name is inscribed (Tuker and Malleson, *Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome*, part iv. p. 341).

103. *Stephen.*] A.D. 896–7.

108. *Theodore*] II.; A.D. 897.

129. *John*] IX.; A.D. 898-900.

134. *Eude King of France*] Odo, Count of Paris, who was elected king of the Western Franks in 888 after the death of Charles the Fat; he died on the last day of 898. For the 'synod' held at Ravenna owing to disturbances at Rome see Milman, *Latin Christianity*, iii. p. 244.

136. *make all blots blank.*] Cf. 677 below: 'the blot is blanched'.

137. *Auxilius*], who gives, *inter alia*, a lively account of Pope

Stephen's proceedings in his *In Defensionem sacræ ordinationis papæ Formosi libellus*; see Mirbt, *Quellen*, pp. 100-101.

142. *Sergius*] III.; A.D. 904–11.

155-7.] Matthew x. 28.

164.] John ix. 4.

166. *my six and fourscore years.*] Not quite accurate; he was born in March 1615, and was now not quite 83. See note on 2080-81.

—. *my due Labour and sorrow.*] Psalm xc. 10.

174.] Understand 'he' before 'gives'; see lines 176 and 197.

182.] The words 'ye shall not surely die' in Genesis iii. 4 are of course the serpent's, but the 'license' here meant is that implied in Genesis vi. 3.

200. *yonder passion*], the hard task of decreeing Guido's death.

203. *A touch o' the hand-bell here.*] Cf. 235, 282; suggested perhaps to Browning by the silver hand-bell which stands on the table before Leo X. in his portrait by Raphael in the Pitti.

212-13. *this sombre wintry day, etc.*] See Introduction to Book X.

217.] For the 'summaries' (*summaria*) see note on I. 146.

221], *i.e.* what line of defence Guido's advocates thought it more judicious to take.

222-6.] There is no evidence in the records that Guido defended himself before the torture was employed or threatened (see Appendix VI.) otherwise than he did afterwards.

228. *a clear rede.*] The *N.E.D.* quotes this passage for 'rede' in the sense of 'tale', comparing *Marmion*, *L'Envoy*:

> Why then a final note prolong,
> Or lengthen out a closing song,
> Who long have listed to my rede?

236. *Irresolute? Not I.*] See Introduction to Book X.—Irresolution is precisely the fault which historians find with Innocent; see Appendix VII.

236-7. *the mound With the pine trees on it yonder.*] Dr. Ashby understands the reference to be to the Villa Barberini, S.E. of the Piazza di S. Pietro, between the Porta Cavalleggieri and the Porta S. Spirito—a spur of the Janiculum, with pine trees on it.

244. *Peasants of mine cry, etc.*] For Innocent's accessibility to the poor see Appendix VII.

250. *Breathe a vein*]=lance it, so as to draw blood; the phrase is 'archaic or obsolete' (*N.E.D.*).

272-5.] Contrast 341-5.—The doctrine that it is 'the *seed* of act' that God 'appraises' is constantly enforced by Browning; the 'vulgar' judge by 'act', he says, 'it is the outward product men appraise' (below, 1673 *seqq.*). Cf. *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, especially stanzas VII., XXIII.-V.; *Saul*, XVIII.:

> What stops my despair?
> This;—'t is not what man Does which exalts him, but what man Would do!

The poet often asserts the same doctrine in the sphere of art; see Dowden, *Browning*, p. 147.

286. *Thy chill persistent rain.*] Cf. XII. 54-5.

293. *How do they call him?*] I cannot answer the question. According to Dr. Berdoe (*Browning Cyclopædia*, p. 440) 'the sagacious Swede' is Swedenborg, but Swedenborg was only ten years old in 1698, and I cannot find that he at any time concerned himself with the Theory of Probability.

297-8.] For the 'Virgilian dip' see V. 402, note.—The words 'when such shall point' depend directly on 'who finds' (294); 'point'='indicate something which is to happen'.

319.] See note on 166 above.

347 *seqq.*] As Agamemnon says in Æschylus (*Ag.* 813), δίκας οὐκ ἀπὸ γλώσσης θεοὶ κλύοντες ψήφους . . . [τίθενται].

349 *seqq.*] Browning constantly declares that human testimony is worthless; cf. XII. 690-93:

> who trusts
> To human testimony for a fact
> Gets this sole fact—himself is proved a fool!—

and XII. 836-40. See also *A Death in the Desert*, line 371:

> What truth was ever told the second day?

Indeed he declares that language fails altogether to express truth; see the end of *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau* and Mr. Stopford Brooke's remarks upon it (*Browning*, p. 421).

354-6.] Cf. VII. 1727, where Pompilia urges in Guido's defence that hate 'was the truth of him'.

358. *So was I made.*] Cf. VII. 1731.

376. *Have no renewing*], *i.e.* cannot be cleansed; the truth cannot be extracted from them. Yet the Pope has said that from the particular 'filthy rags of speech' with which he is here concerned (*i.e.* from the 'dismal documents' of the murder-trial) the truth *can* be extracted:

> Truth, nowhere, yet lies everywhere in these—
> Not absolutely in a portion, yet
> Evolvible from the whole: evolved at last
> Painfully, held tenaciously by me (229-32).

376-7. *He, the Truth, is, too, The Word.*] God alone is the Truth, or, to put it otherwise, His word alone is true, and alone deserves to be called 'The Word'. The Pope is simply saying in other words 'God is true and every man a liar', the text of the Augustinian's sermon (XII. 600-601).—*Devant le Verbe, la Parole par excellence, toute parole sera vaine. Mais ici, pour les hommes, pour nous-mêmes, nous avons besoin de mots, et cela explique son long plaidoyer* (Pierre Berger, *Robert Browning*, p. 221).

381. *That I am I, as He is He.*] That his own existence and God's existence are the only facts of which a man can have absolute knowledge is often asserted by Browning. It is the starting-point of his argument in *La Saisiaz* (lines 217-22).

384-7.] In Ranke's summary of a *Relazione* of the Venetian envoy Contarini (see Appendix VII.) we read that Innocent was early admitted to the prelature. He became vice-legate of Urbino, legislator of Malta, governor of Perugia, was afterwards nuncio to Florence, administered the Polish nunciature for eight years, and was then entrusted with that of Germany. The latter office was commonly followed by the cardinal's hat, but Clement IX. did not so reward him; recalling him to Italy, he made him bishop of Lezze, 'on the extreme boundaries of Naples'. In 1681, when Innocent XI. was Pope, he became a cardinal and immediately afterwards bishop of Faenza, legate of Bologna, and archbishop of Naples (*History of the Popes*, iii. pp. 461-2).

392. *Left nakeder than when flesh-robe was new.*] Cf. *Rabbi Ben Ezra* and especially *A Death in the Desert*, lines 198-205, where St. John (who has so much in common with the Pope) says in his old age:—

> And how shall I assure them? Can they share
> —They, who have flesh, a veil of youth and strength
> About each spirit, that needs must bide its time,
> Living and learning still as years assist
> Which wear the thickness thin, and let man see—
> With me who hardly am withheld at all,
> But shudderingly, scarce a shred between,
> Lie bare to the universal prick of light?

The same thought is conveyed in a somewhat similar metaphor by Waller on *Old Age*:—

> The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
> Lets in new light thro' chinks that Time has made.

398.] Luke xvi. 8.—The reference to 'the world' is explained by line 393.

404. *A solid intellect.*] See Introduction to Book XI. It was by Browning that Guido was 'furnished forth' with a solid intellect.

409. *Is this our ultimate stage, etc.*] On Browning's view of life as probation see note on 1375 *seqq.* below.

413. *makes the stumbling-block a stepping-stone.*] Cf. the words of St. Augustin, often quoted in illustration of *In Memoriam*, I.: *De vitiis nostris scalam facimus si vitia ipsa calcamus.*

423. *her main mankind*], the mass of men, as 'the mainland' in 1608 below means the bulk of a country contrasted with its mere frontier-fringe. 'Her' is an improvement on the 'the' of the first edition.

424-6.] Nature endows the mass of men with an instinct to obey

certain moral laws, so that at first they find it harder to do wrong than to do right. As long as they listen to this instinct and obey these laws life proceeds in an orderly measure and march. Should they turn a deaf ear and disobey, the measure would be broken, the march thrown out of step; nature's careful purpose would be defeated.

437. *man's obedience*], *i.e.* his obligation to obey.

440-43.] See note on I. 261-5.

453. *irreligiousest.*] For the superlative see note on I. 205.

458. *shade or shine.*] See note on I. 1373.

466. *ombrifuge.*] Apparently coined by Browning. It does not mean, as Berdoe supposed, 'a place where one flies for *shade*'—that has already been expressed by 'sunscreen'; C. S. C.'s 'ombrifuge (Lord love you!) case o' rain' interprets it correctly. The word is 'irregularly formed from Greek ὄμβρος' (*N.E.D.*); why did not Browning write 'imbrifuge' from Latin *imber*?

475.] Mark vi. 39, 40.

484. *to the limit.*] Cf. I. 756.

486-510.] Cf. IX. 370-73, where Bottini remarks parenthetically that

> The Pope, we know, is Neapolitan
> And relishes a sea-side simile.

510. *give it to the soldier-crab*], *i.e.* leave your clericate-casing for one who will really do battle for the church. The soldier-crab (*i.e.* hermit-crab) 'carries its shell about with it and changes it for a larger one as it increases in size'.

511. *I find this black mark impinge the man.*] The use of 'to impinge' with an accusative of the thing or person struck 'is now rare or obsolete' (*N.E.D.*).—Is it possible that (as 'black mark' seems to suggest) Browning is here coining a verb from the Latin *pingere* ('to paint')?

522-8.] The Pope intends to judge Guido's life by taking his 'last deliberate act' as a sample of it, just as in 340-45 above he conceives of God as judging *his* life by his 'latest act', by what his life 'last put heart and soul into', *i.e.* by his condemnation of Guido.

530. *enough*], *i.e.* with sufficient reason.

534-6.] Guido's motives in marrying, says the Pope, were as far removed as possible from those commonly alleged as the right motives, by which he feigned that he was actuated. The word 'farthest' must in grammar agree with 'this marriage', but it really refers to Guido's motives; and 'so they were' must mean—what it expresses obscurely—'they were indeed alleged by Guido to be *his* motives'.—There is perhaps an anachronism in the severity of the Pope's condemnation of a *mariage de convenance*, and some unfairness in his assertion, supported neither by the records nor

by the narratives in the poem, that Guido seriously professed that he had been moved by the 'permissible impulses' of 538-9.

540. *all to instigate*] seems to mean 'all that goes to instigate him'; note the repetition of 'all' in line 543. Guido's sole motive in marrying, says the Pope, was one that 'sinks man past level of the brute', viz. 'the lust for money'.

542. *Whose appetite if brutish is a truth.*] Cf. 356 above, and VII. 1727.

557. *a month.*] Strictly speaking, four months, viz. from early in December 1693 to early in April 1694. See Appendix III.

567. *painted plain*], *i.e.* in his mind; see 553.

580. *gor-crow*], *i.e.* carrion-crow; 'gor'—'filth'. Cf. *Aristophanes' Apology*, p. 121:

> Larks and nightingales
> Are silenced, here and there a gor-crow grim
> Flaps past, as scenting opportunity.

580-81.] The comparison is not quite apposite to what immediately follows. Guido found, not that the Comparini treated those weaker than themselves, but that they treated him, as he treated them.

590-91. *the curious crime, the fine Felicity . . . of wickedness.*] Guido's crime was ingeniously and carefully thought out; it showed what Petronius called a *curiosa felicitas*.

595. *the parents, else would triumph.*] See note on 738-40.

600. *Revenge, the manlier sin.*] The same idea is suggested in III. 663-5.

611-19.] Cf. III. 711 *seqq.*

620-30.] See note on I. 631-4. Elaborated similes are more frequent in Book X. than elsewhere in the poem; see 1175-9 and 2119-28.

650.] See Appendix IV.

654. *that other Aretine.*] Pietro Aretino (A.D. 1492–1557); there are references to him in IX. 1204 ('Thy wicked townsman's sonnet-book') and in XI. 1962-3:

> where does Venus order we stop sense
> When Master Pietro rhymes a pleasantry?

He was 'the greatest railer of modern times', and perhaps the most licentious, the most corrupt, the boldest and the most dangerous. 'That notorious ribald of Arezzo', Milton calls him in *Areopagitica*, 'dreaded and yet dear to the Italian courtiers'. 'Every one knows', writes Addison (*Spectator*, No. 23), 'that all the Kings of Europe were his tributaries'. It caused surprise that he did not aim his ribaldry at God, and his epitaph gave a reason why:—

> Qui giace l' Aretino, poeta Tosco,
> Che disse mal d' ognun, fuorche di Dio,
> Scusandosi col dir, Non lo conosco.

Another reason has been suggested, viz. that 'he could extort no money from God by threats or flattery, and was consequently never goaded into blasphemy by a refusal' (Burckhardt, *The Renaissance in Italy*, pp. 167-8).

674. *A second time.*] For the first time see 575 *seqq.* above.

686-7.] Note the optimistic turn which Browning gives to the familiar proverb.

695. *armed to the chattering teeth.*] Guido's advocates maintained that when he appeared at Castelnuovo he was either unarmed (*O.Y.B.* cxliv., *E.L.* 148) or, at any rate, armed only with a travelling-sword (*ense viatorio solummodò instructus*, *O.Y.B.* cxiv., *E.L.* 122). Even the prosecuting advocate Bottini is content to argue that if Guido pursued the fugitives unarmed it was his own fault (*O.Y.B.* cxcix., *E.L.* 203).

703. *Failing the first.*] Guido's first chance came to him through the purity of Caponsacchi and Pompilia, which prevented the sin that he had schemed to bring about.

706. *Nor does amiss i' the main.*] Cf. VII. 1649, where Pompilia says that (so far as she was concerned) 'the judges judged aright i' the main'.

714.] 1 Corinthians iii. 15.

719. *the unmanly means*], *i.e.* to revenge ('the manlier sin'; see above, 600).

724.] For such 'ignominious means' see Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 448; cf. VII. 678.

727. *follows in the chase*], viz. his intimates at Arezzo, who would back him in taking vengeance on his wife and her alleged paramour, but not in taking it by 'unmanly means' and 'vile practice'; these, we have been told (in 710), exposed him to 'public scorn'.

738-40.] A cursory glance at lines 733-42 as printed in the later editions shows that the punctuation in 737 cannot be what Browning intended. 'Craft, greed and violence', he says in 733, 'complot revenge', and after a colon their respective parts in the plot are described, other colons dividing the descriptions. But this orderly arrangement is upset by the full stop which has been introduced, no doubt by a printer's error (see the note on 768 below), into the middle of the second description (after 'beside' in 737). It should be a comma, and there should be no comma before 'beside'; so in the first and second editions.

The metaphor here employed is drawn from the bright spots with which sunshine chequers the ground under a tree. The branches, twigs, leaves of the tree, which intercept much of the sunshine, are Pietro and his family, who intercept a flow of revenue; they prevent the gold from falling upon the ground in a flood for Guido to scoop up. His greed therefore prompts him to destroy them; he will crush the tree, twigs, leaves and all.

With 'possible sunshine <which> else would coin itself' compare IX. 539:

> All those professions, else were hard explain;

X. 594-5:

> [he determines to] pluck one last arch-pang
> From the parents, else would triumph out of reach;

X. 1375-7:

> I can believe this dread machinery
> Of sin and sorrow, would confound me else,
> Devised [for such and such purposes].

741-2. *Advantage proved And safety sure.*] Greed and craft having gained their respective ends.

743. *Murder with jagged knife.*] See note on II. 147; Guido had a dagger

> Triangular in the blade, a Genoese,
> Armed with those little hook-teeth on the edge
> To open in the flesh nor shut again.

Cf. VIII. 1170.

748-51.] Genesis viii. 4, 11.

752-74.] If Guido killed Pompilia before she had given birth to an heir, the capital of which Pietro had the usufruct would go to his kinsmen, the 'rightful heirs' of II. 580; he had therefore a strong motive for sparing her till after her confinement. This argument, borrowed from Bottini, has already been used in III. 1546-69 (where see note) and in IV. 1102-6.—I do not follow the Pope's suggestion that before Gaetano's birth Guido had the same motive for sparing Pietro and Violante.

761. *thou*], *i.e.* the money-bag, with which Guido's soul is identified. See below, 795-6.

768. *come what, come will.*] Browning took great pains with his punctuation (see Appendix XI.), but he was not a lynx-eyed reviser of proofs; the strange comma after 'what' appears in all the editions.

779-81.] The golden age of Saturn (*Quam bene Saturno vivebant rege!*) is a commonplace in Latin poetry; cf. IX. 1227.

784-7.] The evidence given by Guido and his accomplices in the course of the trial (*O.Y.B.* cxxvii.-cxxx., *E.L.* 135-7) shows that he had no difficulty in persuading them.

788. *Christ's birthnight-eve.*] See note on V. 1581.

789-90.] Luke ii. 14.

793. *what is it I said?*] See above, 760.

794. *he suffered cling.*] Cf. XI. 1272, 'I did not suffer them subside'.

801.] James i. 15.

805.] God will not suffer sin to go on to the end unchecked.

809. *Exceed the service.*] It is suggested that up to a certain point sin may subserve God's purposes.

818. *Needs but to ask and have, etc.*] Cf. III. 70, VI. 1093, V. 1723, 'with a warrant which 'tis ask and have'. For Guido's oversight, of which Browning read in the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 264), see III. 1628-30, V. 1722-5, XI. 1625-50, and especially the Introduction to Book XI.

822. *if a ducat sweeten word.*] Cf. XI. 1627-35:

> Any day o' the week,
> A ducat slid discreetly into palm
> O' the mute post-master, while you whisper him . . .
> . . . secures you any day
> The pick o' the stable!

824. *how should he*], *i.e.* how he would, if asked. In the first edition we have here 'in such wise | The resident . . . years,' Guido, instructs, etc.'.

825. *resident at Rome for thirty years.*] A mistake; see note on IV. 392.

830-32.] See note on V. 1725.

834-6.] See *O.Y.B.* v.-viii. (*E.L.* 5-7), where the Sentence is given in full, and the note on XI. 1663-9.

835. *just pronounced.*] Agrees, not with 'sentence', but with 'satire-upon-a-sentence'. The sentence was confirmed by the Court at Florence on December 24, 1697—two months before the Pope rejected Guido's appeal.

838-41.] Cf. V. 1860-65, where Guido is made to speak as the Pope here represents; he suggests that the judges in the Process of Flight may be accused of having

> made common cause
> With the cleric section, punished in myself
> Maladroit uncomplaisant laity,
> Defective in behaviour to a priest
> Who claimed the customary partnership
> I' the house and the wife.

848. *the few permissible miles*], 'permissible' to men on foot and worn out; elsewhere called 'a prodigious twenty miles' (III. 1633, where see note).

850-51.] Matthew viii. 30-32, and elsewhere.

854-5. *He curses the omission, etc.*] See Guido's comments upon it in XI. 1625-50.

856-7.] 'The oversight about the warrant, which hamstrung you (thwarted your flight) to your supposed hurt, was really a mercy-stroke; it saved your life (and thereby gave you a chance of saving your soul—see below, 867-8). For if you had remembered to get the warrant, though you would have escaped arrest and

perhaps crossed the frontier, you would have been murdered promptly by your comrades'.

In XI. 1649-50 Guido says of the post-master who refused to supply him with horses without the necessary permission:—

> He dares not stop me, we five glare too grim,
> But hinders,—hacks and *hamstrings* sure enough.

861-3.] This, like the omission to get a warrant, is drawn from the Secondary Source only; see note on VIII. 1590-1601.

867. *Thither*], *i.e.* 'to thy doom'. The Pope still hopes that Guido may be saved by repentance; cf. 2117-18 below.

869-1238.] Having dealt with Guido (163-868), with whom of course he is primarily concerned, the Pope proceeds to condemn the other evil-doers (869-1003): Guido's brothers and his mother (869-925); his four accomplices (925-64); his backers at Arezzo (965-93), especially the Governor (971-85) and the Bishop (986-93). A vindication of Pompilia (1004-94) and of Caponsacchi (1095-1212) follows; and a balanced judgment—half condemnation and half vindication—upon the Comparini (1213-33) ends the first part of the monologue.

871 *seqq.*] Cf. I. 554 *seqq.* and below, 994-1003.—'If Browning once or twice gives his fantasy play, it is in describing the black cave of a palace at Arezzo into which the white Pompilia is borne, the cave and its denizens' (Dowden, *Browning*, p. 260).

880. *fox-faced.*] Cf. I. 549.

885-7.] Acts iii. 1-10.

893. *Paul steps back the due distance.*] For Paolo's departure from Rome and its motive see note on III. 1540-41.

896-909.] For Girolamo, as represented in the records and in the poem, see note on II. 500-503.

911. *The gaunt grey nightmare.*] A writer of A.D. 1340, quoted in the *N.E.D.*, couples nightmares to foxes and wolves, just as Beatrice as nightmare is here associated with Guido as wolf and Paolo as fox (880-82 above).

931-46.] See above, 784-7 and note.

947.] The earlier editions have 'As cattle would, bid march or halt!'

951. *noble human heart*], *i.e.* the heart which feels the nobility of loyal service to a superior.

954. *Religion.*] Cf. 2076-7 below:

> over-loyal as these four
> Who made religion of their patron's cause.

955.] See Arcangeli's audacious defence of Guido's confederates in VIII. 1603-16.

964. *none of them exceeds the twentieth year.*] The Pope is mistaken. 'Minority' (*i.e.* that they were under 25) was claimed

for only two of the four, viz. for Domenico Gambassini and Francesco Pasquini (*O.Y.B.* xxxix., cxxxviii., cexxx., *E.L.* 37, 143, 232). For Pasquini a baptismal certificate was produced which proves that he was nearly 24 at the time of the murders (*O.Y.B.* cexxx., *E.L.* 232); and a letter written by Arcangeli on the day of the executions shows that it was for him alone that the claim was ultimately pressed (*O.Y.B.* cexxxv., *E.L.* 235; cf. *O.Y.B.* cxxxix., *E.L.* 238).

971-2. *thou know'st Civility better*] than to interfere with a husband on his wife's behalf; cf. 2032-5 below. For 'Civility' see note on II. 1473.

972. *Marzi-Medici.*] The Governor of Arezzo signs himself Vincenzo Marzi-Medici in a letter to Paolo (*O.Y.B.* lxxxii., *E.L.* 90). He does not himself speak of Pompilia's appeals to him, but they were attested by others (*O.Y.B.* liii., *E.L.* 54).

973. *thy kinsman the Granduke.*] Cosimo III., who was then reigning, was the last but one of the Grand Dukes of the Medici dynasty. According to Professor Hall Griffin the Governor was not related to him; he was the son of a Florentine lawyer (*Life of Robert Browning*, p. 315).

987. *Archbishop.*] For Pompilia's appeals to the Bishop (not, as the poet always calls him, Archbishop) of Arezzo see *O.Y.B.* lxxxi., lxxxiv., xci., *E.L.* 89, 92, 99. Browning freely develops, especially in Book VII., what the records say about them.

992.] John x. 12, 13.

993. *anon.*] See below, 1454-70.

997. *Transfix . . . suspiring flame.*] The language is perhaps suggested by Virgil, *Æn.* 1. 44: *exspirantem transfixo pectore flammas.*

1012. *yonder*], viz. on the Castel S. Angelo (Mausoleum of Hadrian). A legend which can be traced back to the time of Leo IV. (847–55) tells that when a pestilence was devastating Rome in 590 Gregory the Great saw, in answer to his prayers, the Archangel Michael sheathing his sword over the fortress. A chapel was dedicated on the summit, by Boniface IV. (608–15), to S. Angelo inter Nubes; but our earliest evidence for a *statue* of the Archangel in that position is given by pictures of the fifteenth century. The present 'armed and crowned' Michael, by Verschaffelt, was placed there in 1752 by Benedict XIV.; that of Innocent XII.'s time, the work of Raffaele di Montelupo (1535), has been removed to one of the courtyards of the building.

1015-16.] The metaphors are suggested by Ephesians vi. 14-17, a passage of which fuller use is made in 1566-70 below.

1016 *seqq.*] Knowledge may defend man like a shield, but Browning (or his characters) frequently asserts, as here, 'the sovereignty of feeling over knowledge' (see Westcott, *Religious Thought in the West*, p. 255, and the note on 1327-8 below).—As philosopher Browning tended, during his later period, to regard

knowledge in any absolute sense as less and less attainable, and of less and less relative value. 'A sceptical philosophy came down like a blight' upon him, says Professor Jones (*Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 333), who detects a trace of this sceptical philosophy in the present passage; but see Introduction to Book VII.

1022.] Cf. 667-72. For 'by who records' cf. *e.g.* 1191.

1025-6.] Revelations vii. 2-4.

1028.] Philippians iv. 8.

1061. *Endure man and obey God.*] This is 'the standing ordinance', 'the old requirement', 'the customary law' (1069-72); it was superseded for Pompilia by 'the novel claim' (1070) expressed in the words 'plant firm foot . . . obey God all the more'.

1065 *seqq.*] See VII. 1222 and *passim* afterwards.

1078. *even tree, shrub, plant.*] Cf. VI. 1375-7 and note.

1083. *with his own sword.*] See note on II. 1031.

1097. *the other rose, the gold.*] See 1047. This Golden Rose was annually blessed by the Pope and given to some king or other illustrious person who had deserved the special gratitude of the Holy See. It was given, for instance, by Alexander VI. to Gonzalo de Cordova, the 'Great Captain' of Ferdinand of Spain, for expelling the forces of Charles VIII. from Italy, and by Leo X. to Henry VIII., the Defender of the Faith, for his 'golden book' in refutation of Luther.—'This mysterious gift, according to Pope Innocent III., represented by its gold, its odour and its balm, the Godhead, the Body and Soul of the Redeemer' (Milman).

1102-11.] The Pope thinks that the Church errs in putting its young men of spirit and promise into leading-strings. He expresses his thought in language drawn from the leviathan-passage in Job (xli.)—a passage already used by the poet in V. 1504-5 and VIII. 1739-42 (where see note).

1105. *bind him for our maidens*], *i.e.* 'give him to our maidens as a pet'. The application of the words is explained by many passages in Caponsacchi's speech (VI.); cf. 2069-72 below.

1106. *The King of Pride.*] Job xli. 34, 'he (Leviathan, *i.e.* the crocodile) is king over all the sons of pride'.

1107. *cord in nose and thorn in jaw.*] Job xli. 2, 'canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?' 'Thorn' is a mistranslation for 'hook'. The meaning is that, when and if you have caught your crocodile, you cannot string him on a line, to keep him fresh in the water, as you can ordinary fish (Driver).

1108. *followed by all that shine.*] The A.V. has correctly (Job xli. 32) 'he maketh a path to shine after him' (*il laisse après lui un sillage de lumière*—Renan). Apparently Browning meant 'followed by other shining creatures such as himself'; he put a meaning on the words which they cannot bear.

1110. *The comely terror.*] Job xli. 12, 'I will not conceal [keep silence concerning (R.V.)] . . . his comely proportion'.

1111. *that piece of netherstone his heart.*] Job xli. 24, 'his heart is firm as a stone; yea, firm as the nether millstone' (R.V.). *La meule se composait de deux pierres superposées . . . dont la plus dure était posée dessous* (Renan). The flashing forth of fire from the netherstone at the stroke of the sword is an addition by Browning to the imagery.

1116-27.] 'What if Caponsacchi's self-sacrifice was offered, primarily and directly, to an idol of his own (*i.e.* to Pompilia), and only indirectly to God and His saints, just as the love and gratitude of the half-Pagan, half-Christian, Roman were offered, primarily and directly, to the Venus whom the Church had changed into Madonna's shape, and only indirectly to Madonna herself? The self-sacrifice, like the love and gratitude, was there all the same.—Again, the sweet savour of the self-sacrifice, the spikenard which grew in the rock-like soil of Caponsacchi's firm and resolute heart, to whomsoever offered, was offered by himself, uninspired by the Church; though the Church, when self-sacrifice is so offered by her sons, is wont to claim it as her own offering to the saints'.

The Pope 'smiles' at the comparison which he has drawn in lines 1116-22, and at the gentle satire upon the Church which he has conveyed under the incense-metaphor in lines 1123-7.

1118-21. *to turn each Venus here . . . Into Madonna's shape.*] Cf. *The Dunciad*, 3. 109-11:

> Till Peter's keys some christ'ned Jove adorn,
> And Pan to Moses lends his Pagan horn:
> See graceless Venus to a virgin turn'd. . . .

To which Pope appended a note: 'After a period of merciless destruction, some classical monuments were spared by the Popes; temples were converted into churches, and statues of pagan gods were occasionally made to do duty as Christian images'.

1123. *All this sweet savour*], *i.e.* that of self-sacrifice; cf. Ephesians v. 2, Philippians iv. 18.

1140. *made bare*], *i.e.* which made bare. 'The healthy rage' is the antecedent to the understood 'which'.

1155. *Conciliating earth with all that cloud*], *i.e.* winning men's hearts by its beauty, in spite of the cloud from which it has emerged (1150).

1164. *how else proclaim fine scorn of flesh.*] A whimsical explanation of the red stockings of cardinals (V. 228).

1165. *when blood faith begs.*] The inversion ('blood' is the object of 'begs') gives emphasis to 'blood'.

1175-9.] The beautiful simile brings out the full meaning of what it illustrates.

1183-92.] R. L. Stevenson wrote in his *Virginibus Puerisque* (c. iii.): 'To avoid an occasion for our virtues is a worse degree

of failure than to push forward pluckily and make a fall. It is lawful to pray God that we are not led into temptation; but not lawful to skulk from those that come to us'. (The Pope, it will be observed, goes far beyond this; cf. James i. 2-4, 12.) '*The noblest passage in one of the noblest books of the century* is where the old pope glories in the trial, nay, in the partial fall and but imperfect triumph, of the younger hero'.

1191. *Reluctant dragons.*] An echo of the *reluctantes dracones* of a famous passage in Horace (*Od.* 4. 4. 11), but Horace's *reluctantes* means that his dragons put up a stiff defence when attacked, the Pope's dragons would avoid fighting altogether.

1195. *through the very pains, etc.*] See above, 1037-40.

1201. *to strike the lute.*] Cf. I. 1030 (where Caponsacchi is described as 'a prince of sonneteers and lutanists'), X. 1490, 2071.

1202.] See Introduction to Book VI.

1211. *the initiatory spasm*], *i.e.* the mixed joy and pain of initiation into a life of self-abnegation; cf. the 'initiatory pang . . . Felicitous annoy' that 'would thrill Into the ecstasy and outthrob pain' of which Caponsacchi speaks in VI. 964-73. (In *Parleyings—Francis Furini*, IX.—the phrase 'initiator-spasm' is used of the beginnings of life, 'the spasm which sets all going'.)

1218. *Sadly mixed natures.*] Cf. I. 530.

1230. *you were punished in the very part, etc.*] Upon this Westcott comments (*Religious Thought in the West*, p. 275): 'For that which is evil there is judgment of utter destruction; for that which is good, purifying. So it is that chastisement is often seen to come through the noblest part of a character otherwise mean, because in that there is yet hope'.

1239. *all and some.*] See note on VIII. 1475.

1243. *dispart the shine from shade.*] See note on l. 1373.

1244. *As a mere man may, etc.*] See above, 243-67.

1246. *the popular notion.*] Cf. VIII. 1458-60, XII. 57-8, 299.

1253-1909.] The 'quick cold thrill' which the Pope suddenly feels (1253) and the voice which 'derides' him (1265) lead him into the long theological disquisitions of which I have spoken in the Introduction to this Book. It will be observed that in the course of these disquisitions (1308-1909) he reverts for awhile to his main concern in 1440-1630.

1261. *recognize*]—examine, pass in review, like the Latin *recognoscere.*

1271. *misprision.*] See note on VIII. 428.

1273. *bold to all beneath*], *i.e.* to all upon whom the light of your candle falls.

1284. *darkness to be felt.*] Exodus x. 21.

1289. *Remembered.*] The word suggests the Platonic doctrine of ἀνάμνησις (recollection), familiar to English readers from Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality.*

1302.] See above, 1192.

1309. *In such conception, etc.*] The 'humanitarian theism' expounded later in the paragraph is not presented as absolute truth, but as the highest conception of the divine nature possible to 'the little mind of man' in his present state. See note on 1366.

1311. *what is it but a convex glass.*] Cf. the closely parallel passage in *A Death in the Desert*, lines 226 *seqq.*

1318. *There* (*which is nowhere*)], nowhere in particular; we speak of God as 'in heaven', but He transcends the category of space.

1327-8.] On the relations of love and knowledge as conceived by Browning see the discussions in Sir H. Jones's *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*; see also the note on 1016 *seqq.* above.—Here knowledge, however incomplete, is spoken of as a necessary basis for love; contrast with the Pope's 'how love unless they know?' the poet's language at a later date in *Ferishtah's Fancies* (*A Pillar at Sebzevah*):—

> So let us say—not 'Since we know, we love',
> But rather 'Since we love, we know enough'.

1330.] Higher 'modes of life' may reflect more of the absolute truth; the conceptions of 'angels' may be more adequate than such as are possible to man. Cf. *Ferishtah's Fancies*: *The Family*, and the lyric which follows; see also 1654 below.

1339. *Thy transcendent act*], *i.e.* the act revealed in the 'tale' (1348) 'of love without a limit'; see note on 1366.

1348 *seqq.*] In lines 1348-52 the Pope speaks of a 'tale' about God (viz. the Incarnation) which is not only dear to his 'heart' but is also pronounced to be sound by his 'reason'; in lines 1362 *seqq.* he proceeds to show wherein the value of the tale lies. The intervening passage (1353-61) may seem at first sight to be a digression, but the appearance of irrelevance is due to the condensation of the argument. The tale, the Pope says or implies, satisfies both his heart and his reason; *why does it satisfy his reason?* Because, apparently, he like most of us has an intuitive conviction that perfection must somewhere exist. He cannot find it in 'matter': it must be found, if anywhere, in 'mind'. Of the minds of created beings that of man is the highest, but perfection is assuredly not there; it is present in none of the three spheres in which we seek for it, neither in his strength, nor in his intelligence, nor in his love (or 'goodness'). Can it be found, in all the three, in God? That God's strength and intelligence are perfect Natural Religion amply attests[1], but evidence that His love is also perfect is wanting 'to

[1] In his later poem *La Saisiaz* (published in 1878) Browning wrote very differently on this point: see the paragraph ending with lines 347-8:—

> No, as I am man, I mourn the poverty I must impute:
> Goodness, wisdom, power, all bounded, each a human attribute.

the human eye, in its present state' ; the two corresponding sides of the triangle—His perfect strength and perfect intelligence—are plain to us, but its base—'love without a limit'—we cannot see. If, however, as we feel sure, there is complete perfection somewhere, the fact that God is perfect in strength and intelligence gives us a presumptive (and reasonable) expectation that He is also perfect in love ; and the 'tale' comes in to confirm that expectation.

1351. *discept*], 'express disagreement'—a very rare word, says the *N.E.D.* quoting *Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha*, XIV.

1360. *in evidence*], belongs to 'the effect' ; the effect which we can see with our eyes.

1366.] Browning admits, or rather he contends, that Natural Religion gives no warrant for the belief that God is 'all-loving', but the idea of a loveless God was utterly repugnant to him ; such a God would be inferior to man. See *e.g. A Death in the Desert*, lines 552 *seqq.* (if man has will, power, and love, however weak, and God has only will and power, however strong, man is 'higher in the scale than God') ; *Christmas-Eve*, V. :

> For the loving worm within its clod
> Were diviner than a loveless god
> Amid his worlds, I will dare to say ;

An Epistle of Karshish, ad fin. ; *Saul*, XVII. and XVIII. ; *Ferishtah's Fancies, The Sun.*

That God is all-loving was to the poet, however he arrived at that conclusion, the greatest and almost the surest of all truths ; was the tale which embodies that truth itself a truth to him—a truth, that is, in the absolute sense ? There is much in the Pope's monologue and in *A Death in the Desert* (see lines 453 *seqq.*) which makes it difficult to answer the question with the confident affirmative which might be given, perhaps, by a reader of *Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day*. Mr. Robert Buchanan, indeed, reported that when asked 'categorically' whether he was or was not a Christian Browning 'immediately thundered "No"', but the poet was often unfortunate in his reporters, who would understand ἁπλῶς what was meant to be understood as subject to important qualification. The evidence of his poetry shows that his 'No' should have been so understood ; his 'thunder' may have been due to a cause of which the indiscreet questioner was serenely unconscious. Meanwhile it is certain that what the poet wrote is in general accord with what one who knew him well tells us that he often said, viz. 'that religious certainties are required for the undeveloped mind, but that the growing religious intelligence walks best by a receding light' (Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 178).

The question of the extent and content of Browning's eclectic Christianity has been much discussed : in spirit it agrees closely

with what is said in Philippians ii. 4-8 (I quote from the R.V.; the A.V. translates incorrectly):—

> . . . not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize [*lit.* a thing to be grasped] to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself [of the prerogatives of Deity], taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death. . . .[1]

1367-72.] See the last note. The doctrine here enunciated—one of Browning's 'two main doctrines or opinions'—is obscured when formulated as Mr. Chesterton says that 'it can only be properly stated', viz. as 'the hope that lies in the imperfection of God' (*Browning*, p. 178). The doctrine is that God *would be* imperfect if He were incapable of self-sacrificing love; the hope it gives lies in its assurance that there is no such imperfection in Him. 'The All-Great' is 'the All-Loving too' (*An Epistle of Karshish*): no more than in power and in wisdom does 'the creature surpass the Creator' in love (*Saul*).

1375 *seqq.*] The presence, says the Pope, of sin and sorrow in the world is only explicable on the theory that 'Life is Probation'—that their purpose is to 'evolve the moral qualities of man', and to fit him for a higher life. We come across this doctrine, in one or other of its aspects, repeatedly in Book X.: in 409-10, in 1185-7, in 1415-19, in 1436-9.

In an article in *The National Review* (December 1902) Leslie Stephen remarked that when expounding, in *La Saisiaz*, the doctrine of immortality, Browning 'repeats the most familiar of all arguments . . . as if they had never occurred to any one before, instead of being the staple of whole libraries of theology'. A like criticism may be made of his treatment of the doctrine that Life is Probation. By its setting, by the mode of its presentation, he often gives a freshness to it, as for instance in *Jochanan Hakkodosh* (*ad fin.*) or in *Pacchiarotto*, XXII.—

> All's for an hour of essaying
> Who's fit and who's unfit for playing
> His part in the after-construction
> —Heaven's Piece whereof Earth's the Induction?
> Things rarely go smooth at Rehearsal.
> Wait patient the change universal—

or again in the late and very interesting *Rephan*; but the same

[1] Since noting this passage for quotation here I find that it is used for the same purpose in Professor Pigou's *Browning as a Religious Teacher*, pp. 34-5. This little book, in which Browning's theology is expounded and discussed with admirable lucidity, should not be allowed to continue out of print.

can hardly be said of its naked presentation here and in *La Saisiaz* (lines 266 *seqq.*) :—

> There is no reconciling wisdom with a world distraught,
> Goodness with triumphant evil, power with failure in the aim, . . .
> If you bar me from assuming earth to be a pupil's place,
> And life, time, with all their chances, changes,—just probation-space.

1376. *would confound me else.*] See note on 738-40 above.

1377-8. *at most expenditure, etc.*] The poet conceives of God as devising sin and sorrow as the necessary means of man's probation, but as devising them sorrowfully. He shares men's pain and grieves at their sin. See Pigou, *Browning as a Religious Teacher*, pp. 32-4.

1382. *Creative*], because he brings good out of evil, 'moral qualities' out of pain.

1384. "*I have said ye are Gods*".] Psalm lxxxii. 6 ; John x. 34.

1387-8. *this . . . The other.*] 'This' is the reason for the presence of sin and sorrow in life ; 'the other' is 'the tale' of 1348.

1393. *else unconceived.*] For if it were the same (*i.e.* absolute truth) man's mind could not conceive it.

1400.] Cf. 1772 *seqq.*

1407. *by God's gloved hand or the bare*], *i.e.* by truth veiled in myth, or by naked ('absolute, abstract, independent'—see 1389) truth.

1408-9.] Browning was not interested in the 'higher criticism' of the gospel-story ; see *Christmas-Eve*, xv.

1412. *some flat obstacle*], some obstacle which we can flatten and surmount.

1413-14.] Progress consists in the surmounting of obstacles ; it is therefore impossible if either (1) there are no obstacles or (2) there are obstacles, but they are unsurmountable.

Does Browning suggest here that the presence of 'solid truth in front' means the absence of obstacles to surmount, or that solid truth would be itself an unsurmountable obstacle ? The former explanation may seem the simpler, and it is consistent with the poet's teaching, but the phrasing of lines 1412-15 supports the latter. 'Solid truth' is not conceivable by man in his present state ; it is an obstacle which he cannot flatten.

1419-29.] If, says the Pope, we view the story of Guido and Pompilia in the light of the belief that life in this world is merely probation for life beyond it, we realize that the destruction of Pompilia's life in this world and what would have been, but for the detection of his guilt, the saving of Guido's are unimportant facts. Life in this world is a little thing, life beyond it is a great one. To form a true estimate of life as a whole we must 'wait till life have passed from out the world'.

1419-20.] The first edition has :

Thus,
O' the present problem : as we see and speak.

1427. *the minute's worth*], *i.e.* of how little worth it is. We are not 'babes' who live entirely in the sensations of the moment.

1437. *compel him strive.*] Cf. 1547 below, 'thus compelled perceive'.—The Pope argues that, if the gain of right living were so manifest that it exercised an imperative force on conduct, life would not be probation; men would live rightly of necessity. Browning often insists upon this, *e.g.* in *A Death in the Desert*, lines 274-97 and 464-73. Miracles, says St. John in the latter passage, may have been necessary in the earliest days of Christianity; at a later stage they would 'compel', and (life being probation) would not help.

1440-1536.] The Pope is not surprised to find that worldlings and sceptics have no use for 'the pearl of great price'. He *is* surprised, and even terrified, to find that churchmen, who know its worth, join the worldlings and sceptics in disregarding it and pursuing worldly aims; it was, for instance, for mere worldly reasons that the Bishop of Arezzo virtually abandoned the faith by his treatment of Pompilia. It may be said, perhaps, that the Church enfeebled the bishop by coddling him; what, then, of the friar called Romano? He was not coddled, but he proved wanting in precisely the same way. Since, therefore, individual churchmen, whether coddled or not, fail the faith in its hour of need, let us 'bind weaknesses together' in the hope that we may find faithfulness in Christian corporations. Alas, they too are unfaithful; witness the Convertites, 'meant to help women because these helped Christ', who fell away from Christian love and were ready to slander Pompilia when worldly interest prompted. Is this, then, the end and outcome of Christ's self-sacrifice? Is this all that his own stewardship has to show? The Pope's dismay at finding that love and faith 'lie sluggish' at the call of the Church is made more poignant when he sees them roused into activity by a call from outside (1547 *seqq.*).

1445. *it proves*], *i.e.* in their mistaken judgment.

1449.] Cf. IX. 372-3, note.

1453.] James i. 27.

1472. *barefoot monk.*] He was an Augustinian *Scalzo*.

1482. *Who was it?*] It was Uzzah (2 Samuel vi. 6, 7), but when Browning made the friar ask the question he thought that it was Hophni; see note on IV. 834.

1488.] Matthew xxv.

1491.] Ephesians v. 32, etc.

1499-1524.] The Pope's attack on 'the Monastery called of Convertites' is not warranted by the facts; see note on II. 1198.

1511-18.] See the last note. The claim of the Convertites

must have been made very soon after Pompilia's death ; it is often mentioned during the murder-trial. See also the *Instrumentum Sententiæ Definitivæ* which cleared her reputation (*O.Y.B.* cclix.-lxii., *E.L.* 252-6).

1518. *by the Fisc's advice.*] The application to the Court on behalf of the Convertites was made by Gambi, 'Procurator General of the Fisc', who in the trial of Guido had appeared with Bottini, 'Advocate of the Fisc', for the prosecution. See XII. 672 *seqq.*

1526.] Cf. VI. 57 *seqq.*

1545-6.] 'No ; *that* ice and *that* stone (*i.e.* human nature) is not as insensitive as real ice and stone. The moon cannot make ice melt, the sun cannot make stone bloom, but human nature can be made to melt and to bloom by the action of certain "powers o' the air" (1553-4). It has done so in many men of times past ; we see it doing so in Caponsacchi to-day'.

1547. *compelled perceive.*] Cf. 1437, 'compel him strive'.

1553-8.] 'Love and faith', says the Pope, 'leapt forth profusely in old time at advent of the authoritative star' (*i.e.* when the Church called for them) ; 'now they no longer respond to its influence, to warmth by law and light by rule, but to uncommissioned meteors' (*i.e.* to the 'instinct of the natural man'—1583, to the call of honour, manliness, and pity—1557-8).

1564. *Should interfuse him*], *i.e.* which in the supposed circumstances would interfuse him.

1566-70.] Ephesians vi. 14-17.

1571-1613.] The Pope answers the 'hubbub of protestation' which he expects by arguing (1) that the zeal of servants of the Church should *outstrip* that of men who act upon instinct (1584-7) ; (2) that it is in fact usually shown in defending mere 'dogma' (1577) and is aroused by mere trivialities of definition (1589-1613) ; it neglects 'the weightier matters of the law'.

1585. *Do not these publicans the same ?*] Matthew v. 46, 47.

1589-1604.] The Jesuits in China, ever since their mission-work began there in the year 1582, had shown a 'politic' (line 1597) tolerance of native customs and beliefs, making the most of points of contact between Confucianism and Christianity. This tolerance caused 'qualms' in the minds of other missionaries, and in 1693 the Pope's Vicar Apostolic in China, Bishop Maigrot 'of Conon in the province of Fo-kien'—Browning's 'To-kien' is a mistake—condemned it in the decree here mentioned ; the point which he most emphasized is that to which Browning refers. *Tien* means literally 'heaven' and the Jesuits' use of it seemed to Maigrot to imply a non-insistence on the personality of God ; he was particularly scandalized by the inscription *King Tien* (literally, 'worship Heaven') being placed in Jesuit churches. But the Jesuits, backed by the enlightened Emperor of China, declared that Maigrot, who was almost completely ignorant of Chinese,

was mistaken; *Tien*, they insisted, denoted, 'not the material heavens, but the Creator of all things'.

Maigrot's decree aroused keen controversy at Rome, and a pronouncement on the subject by the Pope was anxiously expected. Innocent, however, delayed; he did not wish to quarrel with the Jesuits, and perhaps hoped that the storm would blow over; perhaps also, as Browning suggests, he was convinced that the issues involved were of no real consequence. It was not till 1701, when Clement XI. had succeeded Innocent, that it became clear that 'a Fabian policy could not be safely prolonged'; Clement accordingly sent out the Tournon whom Browning mentions as his legate with full powers, but this legateship was most tragically unfortunate; it ended with Tournon's death in prison and the expulsion of the missions from China.

Browning must be wrong in stating that the appointment of Tournon had been pressed upon Innocent; he was 'a very young man', 'hardly more than a youth', in 1701, the year after Innocent's death. The poet makes the Pope call him 'Cardinal Tournon', but he did not become a cardinal till 1707.

See R. C. Jenkins, *The Jesuits in China*; Mr. Jenkins tells the story on the authority of the original documents. The text of a decree issued by Tournon from Pondicherry in 1704, condemning Jesuit accommodations to native beliefs, will be found in Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papstthums*, pp. 303-5, cf. 288-91.

1589. *Five years long, now.*] Since Maigrot's decree in 1693; see the last note.

—. *rounds into my ears*], *i.e.* dins into my ears; Browning uses the phrase incorrectly (see note on IV. 600).

1601. *urgent*], *i.e.* so urgent.

1605-13.] The Pope does not mean that the interests of Christianity are less vital in China than in Europe, but that these interests are not really threatened there; the question which zealots have raised in China touches a mere fringe, not of geographical Christendom, but of Christian doctrine.

1608. *mainland.*] See note on 423 above.

1616. *Metamorphosis the immeasurable.*] Originally 'The immeasurable metamorphosis', but in the second edition Browning preferred to avoid the accepted false quantity (metamorphŏsis).

1618. *its price*], the price paid for it by Christ on the Cross; hence the 'mere' of the next line.

1619. *Rosy Cross.*] The Rosicrucian sect, which had its origin in Germany in the fourteenth century and claimed a certain Rosenkreuz as its founder,

> the stone still sought
> Whereby base metal into gold is brought.

The search was its 'Great Work'.

1634. *Power, Wisdom, Goodness, God.*] See above, 1363-6.

1636-7. *When I outlive, etc.*], *i.e.* when I have outlived the belief in God and my soul is mere dust and ashes.

1643-5. *Clouds obscure, etc.*] It would be over-hasty, says the Pope, to conclude that because difficulties attend the Faith the path of the believer would be easier if those difficulties were removed. In the lines which follow the Pope gives singularly beautiful expression to Browning's favourite paradox that the weakness of a faith may be its strength. Cf. *e.g. Easter-Day*, IV., where the speaker argues that

> You must mix some uncertainty
> With faith, if you would have faith be—

and 1852 *seqq.* below, where the Pope says that 'assurance' may produce 'torpor'.

1647. *better*], *i.e.*, of course, 'may better'; 'better' is a verb.

1650-51. *The incentive . . . no strength . . . comports*], *i.e.* 'the incentive which irresistible strength does not bring with it or involve'. The French *comporter* is often a transitive verb with this meaning (*e.g. l'action comportait le repentir*—Dumas), but I can find no other example of such a use of the English verb.

1657-8.] The 'transcendent act' of the tale of line 1348 (Christ's incarnation and suffering) is to Browning but a type of 'the never-ending self-sacrifice of a loving God'; the poet's doctrine is finely stated in Pigou's *Browning as a Religious Teacher*, pp. 32-4.

1661. *But*] is transitional rather than adversative. After a passing allusion to the 'phantoms' of 1663-6 (see next note) the Pope leaves the Christian world with which he is familiar.

1665-6.] 'Like phantoms—weaklings crying for help as they trip and fall over the obstacles to the Christian faith ("clouds"; cf. 1643) as if they were unsurmountable ("crags")'. To these phantoms the Pope has already, in the preceding paragraph, given such help as he can offer.

1670-1790.] This brilliant and finely phrased pleading, introduced as that of some anonymous old-time bard or philosopher or both, who however proves to be Euripides (1703-9), falls into three parts. In the first the speaker urges that men's judgments upon their fellows—such judgments as the Pope's office requires him to pronounce—may be fallacious, for they are based upon their 'outward product'; of which, even if it were a true criterion, we can judge but crudely. In the second he describes his own moral and theological teaching and its relation to Christianity, of which he claims that it is at least an adumbration. In the third he contends that in spite of all their advantages the accredited representatives of Christianity in the seventeenth century A.D. do not attain to the high moral and religious level reached by himself in the fifth century B.C.—Before the pleading begins we are led to

expect, during its course it is assumed (1687), that the Pope will answer it; and an answer is professedly given in the paragraph which begins with line 1791. The Pope, however, does not traverse any of the pleader's contentions; he merely tries to explain why the Christians of his time are less earnest and zealous than the Christians of 'the day-spring'—a point which has not been directly raised. The pleading is not answered, for indeed the Pope doubts whether it is answerable; admirably suited as it is to the Euripides in whose mouth it is put, it is in fact an avowal of his own misgivings.

1670-81.] The contention of lines 1670-74, that God judges us, not, as we judge one another, by our 'outward product', but by our 'inward worth', finds frequent expression in Browning's poetry; the Pope himself urges it in 272-5. In 1675-81 it is admitted as a possibility that the outward product may in a sense be God's test, but it is argued that, if this is so, He appraises the product by its more or less, not absolutely, but relatively to what, given the producer's powers and opportunities, may be fairly expected from him. God is figured as a 'Machinist' (1678) whose machines may do more or less than He 'exacts'.

1683-4.] See note on 1708-9 below.

1692. *without a warrant or an aim.*] Possibly an unconscious reminiscence of a line in *In Memoriam* (XXXIV. 8).

1698. '*Know thyself*'.] Γνῶθι σεαυτόν, the motto engraved on the temple at Delphi, was ascribed to one of the seven sages, or even to Apollo; Juvenal (*Sat.* 11. 27) says that it 'came down from heaven'.

—. '*Take the golden mean*'], the *aurea mediocritas* of Horace (*Od.* 2. 10. 5), the τὸ μέσον which numberless Greek maxims and the philosophy of Aristotle prescribed.

1704-5.] The pleader proves to be Euripides; the details given about him come from Aulus Gellius, a grammarian of the second century A.D., or from late Lives of the poet. Euripides is said to have gained prizes in athletic contests, to have painted pictures which were long preserved, to have been a pupil of the philosophers Anaxagoras, Prodicus, Protagoras.

He strongly attracted Browning, who when he was preparing for work upon *The Ring and the Book* wrote (in September 1862) from Biarritz to a friend that he was 'having a great read at Euripides —the only book I brought with me', and was at the same time attending to his 'new poem that is about to be . . . the Roman murder story' (see Appendix I.). At a later time, when the murder story had been told, his admiration for Euripides found expression in *Balaustion's Adventure* (1871) and *Aristophanes' Apology* (1875).

1707. *When the Third Poet's tread, etc.*], *i.e.* when Æschylus and Sophocles began to find a rival in Euripides, their younger contemporary.

1708-9.] Euripides was born, according to many authorities,

in the year (and perhaps on the day) of the victory over the Persians at Salamis (480 B.C.). He died in 406 B.C., the year before the defeat of the Athenians at Ægospotami. His lifetime thus included the great age of Pericles.

1711-12.] Cf. Romans ii. 14, 15.

1718-20.] Acts xxiv. 25. Compare the last sentence of Westcott's essay on 'Euripides as a Religious Teacher' in his *Religious Thought in the West*, p. 141: 'It cannot be a mere accidental coincidence that when St. Paul stood on the Areopagus and unfolded the meaning of his announcement of "Jesus and the Resurrection" he did in reality proclaim, as now established in the actual experience of men, the truths which Euripides felt after'.

The whole of this essay, which gives an admirably documented account of the ethics and theology of Euripides, should be read in connection with lines 1718-90.

1721. *strong style*], *i.e.* powerful pen (Lat. *stilus*); cf. 1786 below.

1723.] The note of interrogation in the text should be one of exclamation; so in lines 1724, 1726.

1730. *Galileo's tube.*] The books of Galileo, who was 'a prisner to the Inquisition' (*Areopagitica*) when Milton visited him in 1638, remained on the Index till 1835, but Browning's broad-church Pope of 1698 is interested in his discoveries.—'Optic glass', 'optic tube', were common phrases for Galileo's telescope; see *e.g.* *Paradise Lost*, 1. 288, 3. 590.

1734-53.] A study of the passages quoted by Westcott (see note on 1718-20) will suggest that Euripides's insight as theologian was even keener than Browning represents.

1762. *tenebrific.*] Cf. III. 789.

1766-71.] Compare with this the polytheistic system which Guido elaborately improvises in XI. 1934-2003.

1772-6.] See above, 1400.

1784. *rewardest.*] Innocent, at any rate, is far from rewarding them, as we have seen.

1792.] In the fourth century A.D. certain letters (still extant), alleged to have passed between Seneca, the philosopher who was Nero's tutor, and St. Paul, came to the notice of St. Jerome, who placed Seneca 'in the catalogue of the saints' on the strength of them. They were indeed a recent and a clumsy forgery; but the close resemblance between Seneca's precepts and those of Christianity has given plausibility, or at least persistency, to a belief that he had personal relations with St. Paul. See the interesting argument in Boissier, *La Religion romaine*, Book II. c. 5.

1794. *have got too familiar.*] For Browning's use of the verb 'to get' see note on IV. 1541.

1796 *seqq.*] The Pope describes the enthusiasm and self-abnegation of the first converts to Christianity in language which

suggests that their new birth, their 'initiatory spasm', was necessarily martyrdom (cf. 1833). But I do not think that he means this; see *e.g.* 1806.

1800.] Revelations xxi. 5.

1806.] The Pope follows Luke xviii. 30; the parallel passage in Matthew (xix. 29) omits the definite promise of reward 'in the present time'.

1828. *fail see.*] Cf. IV. 1255, 'he fails obtain'; IX. 1240, 'ye fail preoccupy'. Other omissions of 'to' before infinitives occur in 1815 and 1831-2; with 'allowed initiate' (1815) cf. *Mr. Sludge*: 'allow us share your luck'.

1829-30.] Originally 'Who is faithful now, Untwists heaven's pure white, etc.'. The alteration makes the meaning clearer.

1836. *Will*], *i.e.* the way which will.—The worldling admits with a smile the greater *prudence* of the faithful Christian, which will enable him to reap a richer reward; but feels sure that his own improvident disregard of the future will have no very serious consequences.

1851-1909.] The Pope anticipates, with grave misgivings but not without hope, the coming of an Age of Doubt; see XII. 775-8.

1854-63.] 'Doubt, rightly understood, is just that vivid, personal, questioning of phenomena which breaks "the torpor of assurance", and gives a living value to decision' (Westcott, *Religious Thought in the West*, p. 262). 'The value and strength of a faith corresponds accurately to the doubts it has overcome. Those who never went forth to battle cannot come home heroes' (Jones, *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 317). Browning's thoughts about doubt in religion underlie much of the mere selfishness and sophistry of his Bishop Blougram.

The assurance which the Pope regards as causing torpor is that of mere use and wont. In *An Epistle of Karshish* the torpor of Lazarus is due to the assurance of absolute certainty. But faith should not be based on certainty if life is to be probation; cf. *Easter-Day*, IV. and the note on 1437 above.

1858. *the infant camp*], *i.e.* the camp which was formerly but is no longer 'infant'.

1867. *need*], *i.e.* there is need.

1892. *the lust and pride of life.*] 1 John ii. 16.

1901.] The note of interrogation should be one of exclamation, as in 1723, 1724, 1726.—In the first edition Browning wrote 'whither', which he afterwards changed to 'shall they'.

1904-9.] An antimasque (Ben Jonson called it an 'antic-masque') was an interlude, introduced as a contrast between the acts of a masque, in which 'antics' or grotesque figures took parts; it was often a burlesque of the masque. The 'sock' of line 1909 is the boot of the comic, as the busk is that of the tragic, actor (Latin *soccus*).

A 'kibe' is in Shakespeare, as here, a chap *on the heel*; see *King Lear*, 1. 5. 8-9, *Hamlet*, 5. 1. 152-3. Browning had the latter passage in his mind: 'the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe'.

1912-13.] See above, 1553-8.

1925. *the morrice.*] The 'maze' of line 1917.

1928. *the Augustin*], the saint who made 'the Church's rule his law of life' (1912-13).

1931. *second in the suite*], the second 'experimentalist' (see above, 1910).

1942.] That is what the worldly wisdom and casuistic 'accommodations' of Jesuitism to current ethics have come to to-day.

1945-8.] See above, 926-64.

1954. *The world's first foot o' the dance.*] Substituted in the second edition for the original 'The first foot of the dance'; probably to introduce the tripping anapæst ('o' the dance').

1958. *Paul's sword.*] The sword (which, when raised aloft, 'expresses his warfare in the cause of Christ') was given to St. Paul in art at a late period; according to Mrs. Jameson (*Sacred and Legendary Art*, p. 213), not till the end of the eleventh century. Since the end of the fourteenth 'it has', she says, 'been so generally adopted, that in the devotional effigies I can remember no instance in which it is omitted'.

1968, 1971. *Perchance*], *i.e.* 'Is it . . . ?' The answer is 'no'. Notes of interrogation are needed at the end of lines 1970 and 1974 [1].

1975-6.] Originally 'Remonstrance on all sides begins Instruct me'.

1976-8.] For this 'new tribunal' of 'the educated man', 'the spirit of culture' (2017), see the note on II. 1473.

1981. *blind predecessors.*] Substituted in the second edition for 'the predecessor'.

1983. *I find it pleaded in a place*], viz. in the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O. Y. B.* cli., *E. L.* 154-5); Browning makes his Arcangeli use the very words of the pamphleteer's plea. See note on VIII. 663-7, where I have explained that the Pope might well ask 'when, where?' (line 1982) Christ said *nemini honorem trado.*

1999. *if thou please.*] Cf. *La Saisiaz*, 404: 'Thine the prize, who *stand* aloof'.

2003. *The minor orders.*] Cf. 444-8 above, and see note on I. 261-5.

2004. *With Farinacci's licence.*] For Farinacci, whom Arcangeli describes as his 'Gamaliel', see notes on VIII. 148 and 328. In the *O. Y. B.* there is, I think, no discussion, and consequently no reference to Farinacci's opinion, concerning the extent of the

[1] Since writing this note I find that the first edition has 'Is it' (with notes interrogation, of course) in both places.

immunity which minor orders gave; but, as Professor Hodell has shown (*O.Y.B.* 335), Browning consulted for himself the text of Farinacci on another point, and perhaps he did so on this.

2015. *crowning.*] A decided improvement on the 'proper' of the first edition.

2022-33.] Several small alterations (and improvements) were here introduced in the second edition. In 2022 'Remonstrances' was substituted for 'Apologies'; in 2030 'to' for 'thy'; in 2032 'Anticipate a little! We tell thee' for 'She anticipates a little to tell thee'; in 2033 'Guido's life, sapped society shall crash' for 'Count Guido's life, and sap society'.

2040. *silly-sooth.*] See note on III. 806.

2053.] Cf. XII. 316.

2060. *the three little taps.*] Upon the death of a Pope the Cardinal Camerlengo (Chamberlain) is summoned to the room where the body lies. 'After making a brief prayer he rises, the face of the Pope is uncovered, and approaching the bed he strikes three times with a silver hammer on the forehead of the corpse, calling him as many times by name to answer. As the corpse remains speechless, he turns to his companions, and formally announces that "*Il papa è realmente morto*"' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 516).

2069. petit-maître *priestlings.*] In *John Inglesant* (c. xxxvii.) Shorthouse's seventeenth-century hero is described as having, on a certain occasion at Rome, 'entirely the look of a *petit-maître*, and even—what is more contemptible still—of a *petit-maître* priest'.

2073-4.] See note on 838-41 above.

2080-81. *all four lives, etc.*] A mistake. Browning supposed the Pope to be somewhat older (see note on 166), and Guido's confederates to be much younger (see note on 964), than they really were.

2089. *Hecuba-like.*] When in the last agony of Troy the aged Priam armed himself for its defence Hecuba is represented in Virgil as protesting:

> Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis
> Tempus eget (*Æn.* 2. 521-2).

('The hour calls not for such succour or such defenders'.)

2093. *Reply is apt*], *i.e.* the Pope's (favourable) answer to our appeal is ready to be given.

2101. *asked the Count*], in V. 1549, when he summoned his confederates.

2108-12.] See note on I. 350-60.

2119-28.] With this magnificent description and fine use of a thunderstorm compare another in *Pippa Passes* ('Morning'), where Ottima recalls how, when she and her paramour were lying in a pine-wood,

Swift ran the searching tempest overhead;
And ever and anon some bright white shaft
Burned thro' the pine-tree roof, here burned and there,
As if God's messenger thro' the close wood screen
Plunged and replunged his weapon at a venture,
Feeling for guilty thee and me: then broke
The thunder like a whole sea overhead. . . .

2127-8.] See Appendix X.

2130-32.] The Pope sees a second chance for Guido in the 'obscure sequestered state' of Purgatory. Of his phrase 'which must not be' Sir H. Jones says that 'it seems to carry in it the irrefragable conviction of the poet himself' (*Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 118). Cf. Browning's reflections on the suicides he saw lying in the Paris Morgue, for whom his 'own hope is' (*Apparent Failure*, VII.) that

a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched . . .
That what began best, can't end worst,
Nor what God blessed once, prove accurst.

2133. *I may die this very night.*] See above, 318-31.

BOOK XI.—GUIDO

INTRODUCTION

In Book V. Guido speaks 2058 lines before his judges in the witness-chamber, in Book XI. he speaks 2427 to his visitors in the prison; thus he is allotted between a fifth and a fourth part of the whole poem, exclusive of the many long quotations from his utterances which will be found in other Books. It is perhaps too large an allotment; Mr. Henry James complained, not without reason, that his second harangue is 'alas! too boundless'[1], while Sir Leslie Stephen demurred to the concession of any 'second innings' to the 'loathsome murderer'; the concession, he said, was 'the result of Browning's strange interest in morbid psychology', and that interest, he implied, was not only strange but itself morbid[2]. To the former of Sir Leslie's two propositions, except to the word 'strange', the poet would certainly have assented; he would have hotly disputed the latter. When Ruskin was 'angry with' his *Mr. Sludge the Medium*, he defended himself for having 'anatomized the mood of the juggler' on the ground that 'all morbidness of the soul is worth the soul's study'[3]; it was not, therefore, morbid to be interested in that morbidness. For Guido's second harangue (where Browning, indeed, created as well as anatomized[4]) he

[1] *Quarterly Review*, July 1912, p. 83.—Guido himself speaks of his 'voluble rhetoric' (XI. 174).

[2] *National Review*, December 1902, p. 542.

[3] Ruskin's *Works* (Library edition), xxxvi., p. xxxviii.

[4] See an extract from W. M. Rossetti's diary (July 4, 1869) in *Rossetti Papers*, p. 401: 'Browning called . . . talked about an article in *Temple Bar*, saying that he, as shown in the *Ring and the Book*, is an analyst, not creator, of character. This, B. very truly says, is not applicable; because he has had to create . . . the characters of the book as he conceives them, and it is only after that process that the analysing method comes into play'.

would have offered the same—sufficient or insufficient—justification[1].

Mr. Stopford Brooke was a more sympathetic critic of the poem than Sir Leslie Stephen. He suggested that 'a weaker poet', after giving Guido his say in Book V., 'would have left him there, not having capacity for more'; 'but Browning', he adds, 'so rich in thought he was, had only begun to draw him'[2]. In what Stephen called his first innings the batsman is obliged to play for safety, and exhibits a masterly defence. In his second innings he plays his truer game and hits all round the wicket; to use his own metaphor, he puts off his 'sheepskin-garb, with a curse on't', and 'shows his shag'[3]. The wolf, it is true, is not completely hidden in Book V.—his hate, which is 'the truth of him'[4], Guido cannot hide—, and for that reason[5] the judicious reader, even if the summary in Book I. has not put him on his guard, will hardly be one of those 'not a few persons who when they have finished Guido's first monologue are inclined to believe his plea'[6]; he will not be 'baffled and won' by Guido's sophistries. Meanwhile the criminal gains a hearing by his frank disavowal of any claim to be on a higher level than the average worldling of his time; he even excites a certain sympathy by his presentation of himself as one whom his poverty has made a laughing-stock[7], and whose life has been blighted by deceptions and disappointments. His defence is adroit; his points are often good points; his ecclesiastical attitude is unimpeachable; his attitude towards the judges, although now and then

> Incisive, nigh satiric, bites the phrase[8],

[1] In a short notice, written when only a fourth part of the poem had been published, the Editor of the *Fortnightly Review* (January 1, 1869, p. 125) remarked: 'The theme . . . lies in that department to which English taste, narrow and rigid, usually expresses its repugnance by labelling it as morbid anatomy. . . . That in his mode of handling a theme, at any rate, Mr. Browning is not morbid, needs not be said. Of all contemporary poets he is the most healthy. . . .' In a subsequent article on the completed poem the same writer spoke trenchantly, in his earlier manner, of 'all the odious cant about morbid anatomy' (March 1, 1869). 'Odious cant' from Sir Leslie Stephen?

[2] *Browning*, p. 407. [3] XI. 443-4. [4] VII. 1727.

[5] As well as for another mentioned in the Introduction to Book V.

[6] The words quoted are Professor Hodell's in *O.Y.B.* 279.

[7] Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit

(Juvenal, *Sat.* 3. 152-3) is the burden of much of Book V.

[8] I. 965.

is usually conciliatory; he compels us to admit, what the Court and at least half Rome would have admitted very readily, that his wrongs are not all unreal. In the second monologue he has changed his attitude; he has abandoned diplomacy. We have here and there a frantic appeal, here and there the merest whine, but he is usually defiant and his arguments have ceased to be self-exculpatory. He no longer poses as the Church's faithful son; its members, he declares, are 'born-baptized-and-bred Christian atheists'[1]; he exposes most ruthlessly its falsities and insincerities. Sheer hatred, not, as before, injured honour, is avowed to have been the motive of his crimes; so far as Pompilia was its object, he admits, or rather he insists, that it was aroused by her purity and innocence. The criminal finds relief in laying bare, in all its ugliness, his ingrained and passionate love of evil.—Excellent illustrations of the difference between the two Guidos will be found in their allusions to the Molinist heresy[2]—of these I shall speak in Appendix VIII.—, or again in the places where they deal with the same incidents; contrast for example the full account of the murders in V. 1582-1669 with the shorter references to them in XI. 1275-87 and 1575-1610. I suggest for special comparison the reflections of the hypocrite in V. 1715-25 and of the frank ruffian in XI. 1614-60 on his omission to take precautions before the murders for his safety afterwards. In the witness-chamber that omission is emphasized as a proof that he has not 'schemed'[3]. In the prison it is cited as an instance of

> Artistry's haunting curse, the Incomplete[4];

as the Pope conjectured, Guido 'curses the omission more than the murder'; it was the

> One touch of fool in Guido the astute[5].

Some parts of *The Ring and the Book* attract by sheer attractiveness, Caponsacchi's monologue partly by the happy variety of its tone and manner, chiefly by its noble

[1] XI. 709.
[2] In Book V. Guido professes to share, in Book XI. he ridicules, the popular horror of Molinism.
[3] V. 1722. [4] XI. 1561. [5] X. 853-5.

motive and high passion; Pompilia's by its sustained simplicity, its 'candour' and innocence, its revelation of the holiness of motherhood, the heroine's reverence for the hero; the Pope's by its mellow wisdom, its breadth of outlook, its dignity and elevation. Guido's second monologue, like Iago's speeches in *Othello*, attracts chiefly by repulsion; there is indeed nothing in the poem, nothing in Browning, nothing perhaps in all literature more attractively, or at any rate more arrestingly, repulsive than the sudden change from bravado to craven terror in its final paragraph. Yet no more than Iago's speeches is Book XI. a mere study of the depths of wickedness. Browning's Guido, like his other scoundrels, his deceivers and self-deceivers, is highly intellectualized; his thoughts, like theirs, often hit the truth, they are sometimes profound, sometimes almost noble; he is a master of irony, satire, and invective; many of his descriptions, some of his vilest imaginings, are of amazing power and brilliancy. Among passages which justify one or other of these statements may be mentioned his account of his first introduction to the newly-devised *mannaia* (179-258); his attack on the Christians and Christianity of his day (515-763); his avowal of his own fundamental beliefs (1915-2003); his expression of his preference for 'colour' in women, of his loathing for 'chalky' purity (2045-2227). It may also be noticed that the colouring of place and time, so vivid throughout the poem, is not least vivid here. It is present throughout the Book and not merely in patches; but attention may be called to Guido's sketches of the insolence of Tuscan and of Roman nobles (99-106, 191-213, 267-75), of the sacristan among his relics (567-78), of the conduct to be expected under given circumstances from the Pope's halberdier and from 'his Altitude the Referendary' (626-62), of the layman who is reminded when at mass that he has left 'his cask a-tilt, the Trebbian running' (682-92), of the eunuch who plays Armida at the opera (1410-20), of the probable result of the expected election to the papacy (2259-65)[1].

[1] In parting company with the Guido of Book XI. I would direct attention to Mr. Swinburne's enthusiastic appreciation of that 'model of intense and punctilious realism . . . so triumphant a thing that on its own ground it can be matched by no poet; to match it we must look back to Balzac'. It occurs in an essay

Browning found no hints in his Yellow Book for the self-revelation of Guido which his monologues present; it does not even contain his deposition in the Process of Flight, though it contains those of Pompilia and Caponsacchi. It gives a few of his utterances on various occasions and some portions of his evidence in the murder-trial, but neither these, nor the known facts of the story, suggest the highly educated and intellectual villain of the poem. The love-letters, if Guido forged them, show that he had some acquaintance with literature, the design of which, on that hypothesis, they were the instrument, show a criminal's ingenuity; but that is all.—For the visit of the ecclesiastics to the prison Browning had authority; he read in the Secondary Source:—

> At the eighth hour [say about 2 A.M. on February 22] Franceschini and his companions were marked out for death [?] . . . Assisted by Abate Panciatichi and Cardinal Acciajoli they did not delay in preparing themselves to die well[1].

The same writer says further that Guido made a good end, 'dying with the name of Jesus on his lips'; of this the poet makes use in Book XII. (173-89). The object of the visitors was of course to extract from the prisoner a full confession, so that he might be 'absolved and reconciled with God'[2]—and might supply a conclusive testimony to the justice of the judgment of the ecclesiastical court[3]. In declaring that their object was attained the author of the Secondary Source is supported by the ecclesiastically-minded author of the post-Browning pamphlet. If this latter writer was correctly informed, Guido did not 'scream' and 'foam and curse and blaspheme', as the poet represents, in his last hours; 'he cast himself into the arms of the Frati and showed such signs of lively

called 'Notes on the Text of Shelley' which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* for May 1, 1869, three months after the publication of Book XI.; the essay contains a masterly comparison of Browning's Guido with Shelley's Count Cenci. Writing on November 28, 1875, Swinburne said of what he called Browning's 'new sensation novel' (*The Inn Album*): 'It is a fine study in the later manner of Balzac, and I always think the great English analyst greatest as he comes nearest in matter and procedure to the still greater Frenchman' (*The Letters of A. C. Swinburne*, edited by Gosse and Wise, i. pp. 246-7).

[1] *O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265.

[2] I. 1323.

[3] As Guido insists, *e.g.* in XI. 512-14.

contrition that his prayers were accompanied by their tears rather than by their exhortations'[1].

NOTES

(*N.B.—The numbering of the lines in the notes to this Book, after line 923, is that of the second and all subsequent editions, but not that of the first edition. See 'Lines Added' in Appendix XI.*)

2. *Abate Panciatichi.*] A relative of this Abate—the Cardinal of line 1245 was Secretary of Briefs to Innocent XII. and his predecessor.—The Panciatichi family, who had been the leaders of the Ghibellines in Pistoia, settled in Florence about A.D. 1300.

3. *your ancestor.*] The Acciaiuoli were another old Florentine family. A dynasty of this family, 'plebeian at Florence, potent at Naples, and sovereign in Greece' (Gibbon, c. lxii., *ad fin.*), held the dukedom of Athens in the fifteenth century. Niccolò Acciaiuoli, the ancestor here mentioned as the founder of the Certosa di Val d'Ema (see next note), settled at Naples as a trader, made a large fortune there, and became Grand Seneschal (see line 14 below) of the kingdom. Landor gives an account of him in his *Pentameron of Boccaccio and Petrarca.*

4-14.] The Carthusian monastery (Certosa), built on a hill at the confluence of the Greve and the Ema, is well known to visitors to Florence. The one-arched bridge of line 9 is some $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Porta Romana.

17. *their scaffold planks.*] See the description below, 207-49.

24. *ere break of day.*] See the passage quoted from *O.Y.B.* 213 in the last paragraph of the Introduction to Book XI.

32. *twelve hours hence.*] Cf. 123 below. According to the records Guido was told at the eighth hour (about 2 A.M.) that he must die; 'the Company of Death and of Pity' (see last paragraph of this Book) arrived at the prison at the twentieth hour (about 2 P.M.); the execution took place 'after dinner' (*O.Y.B.* ccxxxix., 213, *E.L.* 238, 265).

33-8.] The gaoler's encouraging belief 're-echoed the conviction of all Rome', if Browning's Venetian of rank judged rightly (XII. 78). The poet's authority was a letter written by a certain Carlo Ugolinucci immediately after Guido's execution (see Introduction to Book XII.); he declares that on the resolution of the court to await the proofs of Guido's 'clericate' the defence 'began to breathe again' (*O.Y.B.* ccxxxix., *E.L.* 238).

37. *fee of the good hand*], *i.e.* a tip; Italian *buonamano.*

40. *Whoever owned wife, etc.*] Cf. *e.g.* I. 866-7, II. *ad fin.*

[1] *O.Y.B.* 224, *E.L.* 279; Hall Griffin, p. 324.

45-54.] For Guido's claim on the ground of his 'clericate', of which we learn in the records only from the letters written after his execution (I. 257-9), see *e.g.* X. 1999-2014; for the Pope's rejection of the claim see I. 328-36.

56-7.] See Appendix VII.

64. *no such stuff's extant.*] See below, 557 *seqq.* There are no Christians now in Rome, says Guido, only 'born-baptized-and-bred Christian-atheists' (709); if by waving a wand he could make Rome Christian, an explosion would follow (622-5).

72. *capital o' the cursed kind.*] See note on I. 178-9.

108. *jauncing pride and jaunty port.*] In *Richard II.* (5. 5. 94) the king says that he is 'spurr'd, gall'd and tired by jauncing Bolingbroke'; in their note Clark and Wright quote from Cotgrave: 'Iancer un cheval. To stirre a horse in stable till hee sweat withall; or (as our) to jaunt; (an old word)'. In *Romeo and Juliet* the Nurse exclaims 'What a jaunt [Q2 has 'jaunce'] I have had!' She has, she says, been 'jauncing up and down' (2. 5. 26, 53).

130. *while I tell you.*] Below, 179-258.

145. *shrunk-shanked.*] *As you like it*, 2. 7. 161: 'His youthful hose . . . a world too wide For his shrunk shank'.

147. *windlestraws.*] The word is applied in Scotland and in the North of England to dry stalks of grass left standing; also, figuratively, to persons feeble in physique or infirm of purpose. Browning uses it in the literal sense in *Fifine at the Fair*, IX., where 'thistle-fluffs and bearded windlestraws' are spoken of as materials for birds' nests; cf. *Old Mortality*, c. vii.: 'I had rather that the rigs of Tillietudlem bare naething but windle-straes and sandy lavrocks than that they were ploughed by rebels'.

181. *many a good year gone.*] See note on 272 below.

188. *the Mouth-of-Truth.*] The Bocca della Verità is a large marble disc with the mask of a Triton and an open mouth, which possibly served as the mouth of a drain; it is in the vestibule of the church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, to which it gives an alternative name. 'It was believed that if a witness, whose truthfulness was doubted, were desired to place his hand in the mouth of this mask, it would bite him if he were guilty of perjury' (Hare, *Walks in Rome*, i. p. 159).

189. *wherefore coy ?*], *i.e.* why was Mannaia coy ?

196. *Who stabled buffaloes.*] 'Buffaloes may be seen in herds here and there [in the Campagna]. These beasts are still more powerful than the oxen, and are used to do all the hardest work. . . . All along the outer walls of Rome, at regular intervals, little pens are railed off with strong beams to afford refuge to any pedestrians in case they may chance to meet a drove of buffaloes or of oxen' (Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 357). In old days there were buffalo races in the city (*ibid.* pp. 551-2).

224. *slid*] would perhaps be the right word. In the first of his *Letters on a Regicide Peace* Burke speaks of the executioner fitting to the size of his victims 'the slider of his guillotine'.

234. *trundles.*] The verb is often used intransitively by Browning; cf. *e.g.* 644 below. Addison notes (*Spectator*, No. 253, quoted in *N.E.D.*) that in certain lines of Homer the stone of Sisyphus, having been 'heaved up by several Spondees', at last '*trundles* down in a continual line of Dactyls'.

243. *Discoursed this platter.*] This transitive use of 'to discourse' is archaic (*N.E.D.*); cf. I. 645, 'discoursed the right and wrong'.

260. *Was not a Pope, etc.*] The pope in question must be Alexander VII., who reigned from 1655 to 1667; he was reputed to be witty. See note on 272 below.

261. *the Merry Tales*], perhaps those of Sacchetti; see notes on III. 1446 and V. 560.

263. *cullion.*] Properly one easily deceived, as here; but used as a mere term of abuse by Shakespeare (*e.g.* in *Henry V.*, 3. 2. 22).

272. *Florid old rogue Albano's masterpiece.*] Francesco Albano, born at Bologna in 1578, taught at Rome and died in 1660; Ruskin could 'still follow his prettiness' and enjoy his Cupids. His masterpiece of 'bouncing Europa on the back o' the bull', for which Browning here provides a model, is at Petrograd, where the poet may have seen it in 1834; there is a replica of it in the Uffizi at Florence (Hall Griffin, *Life of Robert Browning*, p. 63).—Since Albano died (at the age of 82) in 1660, the picture was not painted later, probably it was painted much earlier, than in that year; and according to Browning's story it was newly painted when Guido first made acquaintance with Mannaia. How old was he in 1660? Browning makes him forty-six when he married in 1693 (see note on I. 782-4); that would make him thirteen in 1660. But he was in fact born in 1658.

278. *lout and clout.*] See note on IX. 1039-40.—'Clout' (as synonym for 'lout') means literally 'clod'.

291-2.] *Atlas* and *Axis* are the two uppermost vertebræ of the neck; Symphyses are the unions of bones by cartilage. Browning represents Guido as having studied anatomy at the suggestion of his fencing-master (283-9); he had himself done so 'with reference to the expression of form' (Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 232). During her last winter in Rome, that of 1860-61, Mrs. Browning wrote: 'Robert has taken to modelling under Mr. Story . . . and is making extraordinary progress, turning to account his studies on anatomy' (*ibid.* p. 230).

294-5.] Ecclesiastes xii. 6: 'or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken'. Browning's 'silver cord' is the spinal cord (see below, 642), and his 'gold bowl' is the brain.

303. *extravasate*], *i.e.* forced out of its proper vessel.

304-5.] See note on II. 1495.

307. *arachnoid tunic of my brain*], *i.e.* the membrane which coats the brain and the spinal cord.

311. *Fagon*] was chief *physician* to Louis XIV.; was he also a surgeon, as Browning and Thackeray (in *Esmond*) say? I have read of him as ordering operations, but not as operating.—Macaulay in his chapter (iii.) on the 'State of England in 1685' notes that at the time 'those exquisitely fine blades which are required for operations on the human frame' came from France.

314. *Pistoja-ware.*] The town of Pistoia, formerly Pistola, was and is famous for its manufacture of weapons. From it comes the word 'pistol', which was originally applied to a dagger. In modern Italian *pistola*=pistol, *pistolese*=cutlass.

327. "Petrus, quo vadis?"] Guido alludes to the legend, told by St. Ambrose, that when, in the reign of Nero, St. Peter was fleeing from Rome along the Appian Way, he met our Lord coming to the city and asked him, 'Lord, whither goest thou?' (*Domine, quo vadis?*). On hearing the answer, 'I come to be crucified again' (*Venio iterum crucifigi*), he returned to Rome and was there martyred.

In the church of *Domine Quo Vadis*, half a mile south of the Porta S. Sebastiano, where the road to Ardea branches off from the Appian Way, the footprint of the Saviour is shown.

330. *raised up Dorcas.*] Acts ix. 36-41.

342. *leave me linger*], *i.e.* (he should) leave me (to) linger; cf. 646-7 below.

352. *overset*] 'upset'; now out-of-date, but used *e.g.* by Morris in *The Man born to be King*, and often by Carlyle in his *French Revolution*.

358] introduces a new point. Guido argues: (1) I am so near death anyhow that the Pope need not trouble to kill me (341-57); (2) he ought to be more merciful than the law, but is showing himself less so (358-409); (3) he is acting maliciously; lest people should condemn him, he is trying to make me confess that I am guilty (410-34).

364. *fire-new.*] See note on V. 529.

371.] Malachi iv. 2.

386. *such illogical inconsequence*] as is shown in the words put into the Pope's mouth above.

393. *none disputes, etc.*] All agree that the Pope should grant me the benefit of clergy which I claim; see X. 1998-2014.

411-12. *ought . . . confess.*] See note on 1451-2 below.

425.] People of importance, says the speaker, took different views; see XII. 94-7, 110-12.

429. *Some of us add, obtuse.*] Cf. VIII. 1458-60, XII. 57, 299; in the last place 'Somebody's thick headpiece' is the Pope's.

429-30. *age never slips, etc.*] Browning makes Arcangeli say the same thing in his letter to Cencini (XII. 301):

> How these old men like giving youth a push!

435-7]. The wolf robs the thief by robbing his intended victims.

451. *boards, shaking now*], *i.e.* the boards of which are shaking.

456-60.] Guido states his view of the meaning of his visitors.—In line 460 as printed there is a strange mixture of the *oratio recta* of 'so, quick, be sorry' with the *oratio obliqua* of 'my soul'. 'So, quick, be sorry' should probably be printed within inverted commas.

469-70. *you dare no more, etc.*] You are determined, says Guido, that I shall die, but you don't dare to condemn me to hell afterwards; you therefore want me to show penitence.

473-4.] For this incident see note on III. 1622-4.

476. *to play a prize*], *i.e.* to play a winning game, 'to fight you and foil you'. Cf. Massinger, *A New Way to pay Old Debts*, 4. 2. 127-8, 'if I play not my prize to your full content', where 'to play my prize' means 'to play my game successfully'. For the precise technical meaning of 'prize' in such expressions see *Shakespeare's England*, ii. p. 389.

489. *increase*], *i.e.* raise your demands.

494. *you looked me low*], *i.e.* laid me in the dust by your mere glance; you had no need to use a weapon. The same thing is expressed by 'exposed the Gorgon shield' in line 507.

506. *the adventure*] of a passage of arms with me.

507. *the Gorgon shield.*] Whoever looked on the Gorgon's head was turned into stone; Athene placed it in the centre of her shield.

514. *take the word you want.*] 'You want a word from me', says Guido, 'and you shall have it'. But the word they get will not be the word that they would like to get.

521. *Plainly.*] The first syllable of the word is emphasized; it does duty for two (cf. VII. 655). Browning might have secured the proper number of syllables by inserting a 'to' before the infinitive 'put', but the rhythm so obtained would have been even less good.

529-30.] A step in the reasoning must be supplied; line 530 does not follow as an immediate consequence from 529.

533. *mere reprisal, envy makes*], *i.e.*, of course, *which* envy makes. The envy in question is the envy felt by the weak, who make the 'pact' and abide by it, for the strong, who break it for their own advantage. Readers of Greek will be reminded here of the sophistries exposed in the earlier books of Plato's *Republic*.

549-52.] 'Do you say', asks Guido, 'that the fault you find with me is not that I defied the law of man, but that I disregarded a divine precept which Christians recognize?' He answers that Christians nowadays are mere hypocrites who care nothing for divine precepts (553-763).

553. *Colly my cow!*] *N.E.D.* quotes a Leicestershire glossary for 'colly my cow' as 'a term of endearment for a cow'; 'colly', it says, means 'without horns'. 'Sing, oh poor Colly, Colly my cow' occurs in Halliwell, *Nursery Rhymes*, 86.

In what sense did Browning understand the phrase? Does Guido pretend to be soothing his visitors?

I quote (without accepting) the following suggestion from *Notes and Queries*, February 26, 1916:—

"COLLY MY COW!" (12 S. i. 91.)—Can Guido's exclamation be a reminiscence of the old sixteenth-century term of abuse applied to Huguenots—in its original form "the cow of Colas," *la vache a Colas*? A stray cow, belonging to a certain Colas Pannier, entered a Protestant place of worship at Bionne. The Huguenots, thinking the cow was driven in among them on purpose, seized and killed it. The sheriff (*bailli*), however, made them indemnify its owner. Songs were soon written and sung by the Catholics in memory of the incident. *Vide* note to M. Louis Batiffol's *The Century of the Renaissance*, as translated in *The National History of France* just published, p. 245.

A. R. BAYLEY.

A quite impossible interpretation will be found in Dr. Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, p. 275.

570. *In Mesopotamy.*] The Cophetua of legend was an Ethiopian king; Guido's reference to him and to his kingdom here is a scornfully wilful blunder; cf. his reference to Innocent XII. as 'Pope the Five-Hundredth (what do I know or care?)' (121 above).—In *2 Henry IV.*, 5. 3. 105, Falstaff enquires of Pistol:

> O base *Assyrian* knight, what is thy news?
> Let King Cophetua hear the truth thereof.

583. *Later ten days.*] See note on VIII. 283-6.

584. *the candle-contest*] of the evening of Shrove Tuesday; it is thus described by Marion Crawford, *Ave Roma Immortalis*, i. p. 201: 'Then, if it were the last night of Carnival, myriads of those wax tapers first used in Saturn's temple of old lit up the street [the Corso] like magic and the last game of all began, for every man and woman and child strove to put out another's candle, and the long, laughing cry "No taper! No taper! *Senza moccolo!*" went ringing up to the darkling sky. . . . Put out at every instant, the little candles were instantly relighted, till they were consumed down to the hand; and as they burned low, another cry went up, "Carnival is dead! Carnival is dead!" But he was not really dead till midnight'. See also Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 91. There is a lively description of the candle-contest in Dumas, *Monte Cristo*, ii. c. xv.

590. *Professors turn possessors.*] Explained by what follows.

614. *Preside your college.*] A Gallicism, employed also by Carlyle; cf. M. Arnold, *Balder Dead*, i. *ad fin.*:

> the troops of dead,
> Whom Hela with austere control presides.

616. *gird your loins and wash my feet.*] John xiii. 4-14; the

Pope washes the feet of old men on Maundy Thursday in observance of our Lord's precept in verse 14. English sovereigns did the same till the time of James I.

626-7.] 'The privates of the Swiss guard carry halberds 8 feet long, with fine damaskeened steel blades. . . . The peculiar dress of the Swiss guard is said to be the ancient doublet and hose of the Swiss national costume, modified by designs of Michael Angelo. It consists of full breeches to the knee of alternate stripes of red yellow and black. The stockings are striped yellow and black. . . . Their doublets, padded at the shoulder and drawn in at the waist by a belt, are of smaller stripes of red yellow and black' (Tuker and Malleson, *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome*, Part iv. p. 356).

638. *His Altitude the Referendary.*] 'His Altitude' = *Sua Altezza.* The *Referendarius* is an official of great antiquity; the Gothic king Theodoric had his *Referendarius* (*i.e.*, says Hodgkin, reporter in the Court of Appeal), and the secretaries of the early kings of the Franks bore the same title. In the later imperial and the papal courts the Referendary was charged with such duties as examining and reporting on petitions.

642. *Will cut the spinal cord . . . ugh, ugh!*] See above, 294-6.

644. *trundles.*] See note on 234 above.

646. *Shall end*], *i.e.* which shall end.

663. *What talk then of indecent haste?*] There would be talk of indecent haste in the cases described in 626-37 and 638-58.

675. *round him in the ears.*] See note on IV. 600.

683. *tinkle near.*] The 'tinkle' is the ringing of the bell at the elevation of the Host.

699. *mumping.*] See note on 1895 below.

705.] Cf. VII. 1167-79.

718. *the creature's obligation*] to be absolutely sincere towards his Creator.

734-40.] Either entirely submissive, or entirely independent (though respectful).

735. *your caudatory.*] To be taken figuratively, of course; a *caudatorio* is a prelate's train-bearer.

750-56.] They 'laugh in the face of faith' by rending hair, gnashing teeth, and cursing!

758. *dungy earth.*] The phrase is from Shakespeare: *Winter's Tale*, 2. 1. 157; *Antony and Cleopatra*, 1. 1. 35.

760-63.] Luke xv. 16-23.

774. *bloody drunkards*], *i.e.* drunkards in the quarrelsome stage, ready to use their knives like true Italians; cf. 784.

788. *Chap-fallen.*] In VI. 134 Browning writes 'chop-fallen'; cf. *Hamlet*, 5. 1. 212. The two forms are, perhaps, about equally common; 'chap-fallen' is preferred here because of 'chop' in 785.

789.] Romans xiii. 4; a passage already used in IX. 1116.

796. *Elude your envy.*] See note on 533 above.

800. *one genius ruled our births.*] A man's 'genius' is his tutelar spirit, 'the companion who tempers a man's birth-star' of Horace, *Epp.* 2. 2. 187 (*natale comes qui temperat astrum*).

821. *still play wolf, etc.*] Cf. 405, 435-44.

831-45.] If the choice were still open, Guido would choose to be 'free your foe', but, though not 'subsidized', he would contrive to levy black-mail.

846. *We'd try conclusions.*] See note on V. 1125.

878-80.] The only sense in which Guido could maintain that Pietro and Violante had helped the flight was that they were represented as having advised such a flight in the faked letter of Pompilia to Paolo, sent from Arezzo more than three years earlier (*O.Y.B.* lv., *E.L.* 57; they advised, the letter says, 'that I should choose a young man congenial to me, and flee to Rome with him').

893. *gets called.*] See note on IV. 1541.

905. *Crowned his head*], *i.e.* with horns, made him a cuckold. Browning saw the unedifying picture at Vallombrosa Convent during his visit there, described by Mrs. Browning, in 1847.

916. *horn-blind.*] Guido plays on his being blind to the fact that he is a cuckold.

924.] The line was added in the second edition, perhaps unnecessarily.

925-7.] 'I conceive of the eye of God as "filling up" the whole space above me and devouring me as I crawl, a tiny speck upon the ground; I conceive of it, that is to say, as the wrath which immensity wreaks on nothingness'.

929-30. *by Vittiano . . . wanting to trap fieldfares.*] See note on V. 364.

941. *Someone declares, etc.*] Cf. VII. 1731 and 2100-1 below:

> So am I made, "who did not make myself:"
> (How dared she rob my own lip of the word?)

Pompilia pardoned Guido on her death-bed (see the attestations of Fra Celestino, *O.Y.B.* lvii., lviii., *E.L.* 57-8, 59), but she is not quoted as using this 'argument' in his defence.

970 *seqq.*] Compare Pompilia's account of the incident in VII. 389 *seqq.*

977. *balls of black.*] Browning represents Pompilia as black-eyed and black-haired (II. 275, III. 67, IV. 456, where see note, XI. 1349, 1367).

978. *the old simile*], found, for example, in the famous passage in Lucretius (I. 87-99) on the sacrifice of Iphianassa (Iphigenia). Cf. VII. 579-80.

980. *insuppressive*] not to be suppressed; cf. *Colombe's Birthday*, Act II., 'insuppressive joy on every face'. Adjectives with

this, properly active, termination have often a passive force in Shakespeare and Milton; 'insuppressive' occurs in *Julius Cæsar*, 2. 1. 134, 'the insuppressive mettle of our spirits'. See note on 'inexpressive', IV. 528.

997. *Esther in all that pretty tremble.*] The reference is to 'The Rest of the Chapters of the Book of Esther' (in the Apocrypha), c. 15, where Esther appeals to Ahasuerus for her fellow-countrymen in 'the perfection of her beauty', but 'in anguish for fear'. The king 'looked upon her in fierce anger'; she 'fainted and bowed herself upon the head of the maid that went before'. But God 'changed the spirit of the king into mildness'; he 'leaped from his throne, and took her in his arms . . . and comforted her with soothing words. . . . He held up his golden sceptre, and laid it upon her neck, and embraced her'.

998. *the dove o' the sceptre.*] The dove is mentioned neither in the chapter from which I have quoted nor in the verses in the Book of Esther (4. 11, 5. 2) in which the king is said to hold out his sceptre as a sign of favour and the queen to touch the top of it as an act of homage. Perhaps Browning had in mind the rod (or sceptre) 'with the Dove upon the top' which in the English coronation service is called 'the Rod of Equity and Mercy'.

1025. *that first wheelwork.*] Cf. *A Death in the Desert*, lines 448-9:

> Was man made a wheelwork to wind up
> And be discharged, and straight wound up anew?

and *Sordello*, V. 447.

1028-31.] If Pompilia would but have admitted what she saw but professed not to see, viz. that 'I am the wrought man worth ten times the crude', she might have awakened love between us.

1040. *toy*], *i.e.* fancy.

1056. *the next weeks*], *i.e.* the weeks of which Pompilia speaks in VII. 472-81, those which passed between the marriage at Rome and the departure for Arezzo. See Appendix III.

1072. *their coming*], *i.e.* the coming of 'friendship, as they name satiety'; 'its' would have suited better than 'their'.

1089.] The line was added in the second edition. It seems so necessary to the sense that it was perhaps omitted in the first edition by a printer's mistake.

1100. *the hundred-petalled Provence prodigy*], the 'queen rose' of the period (1103); see note on V. 673.

1107. *the minim.*] See note on VIII. 1453.

1118. *The dreadful bronze our boast.*] Bellerophon (line 1120) slew the monstrous Chimæra, described by Homer (*Iliad* 6. 181) as 'a lion in front, a serpent behind, a kid in the middle' (*πρόσθε λέων, ὄπιθεν δὲ δράκων, μέσση δὲ χίμαιρα*); it took its name, as Guido says (1120-23), from its harmless middle part. A large bronze statue of the Homeric Chimæra, believed to be of Etruscan work-

manship, was discovered at Arezzo in 1554; it is now in the Etruscan museum at Florence.

1150. *Sir Dignity.*] Cf. 'Sir Jealousy' (V. 1147); so in Shakespeare, *e.g.* 'Sir Valour' (*Troilus and Cressida*, I. 3. 176), 'Sir Oracle' (*Merchant of Venice*, I. 1. 93).

1156. *tawdry*] is usually, of course, an adjective. The word was formerly used in the phrase *tawdry lace*, which meant lace bought at St. Awdry's fair, held in the Isle of Ely (and elsewhere) on St. Awdry's day, Oct. 17. Tawdry is a familiar corruption of St. Awdry' (Skeat).

1179.] See above, 405, 443, 821 *seqq.*

1190. *perdue.*] See note on III. 1233.

1195. *four hubbub months.*] See Appendix III.

1204.] See V. 754 *seqq.*

1222. *Rounded myself in the ears.*] See note on IV. 600.

1230. *the silly-sooth.*] See note on III. 806.

1247. *The palace in Via Larga.*] The Palazzo Panciatichi (built, says Guido, 'only the other day'—Baedeker says, 'about 1700') is at the south end of what was formerly the Via Larga and is now the Via Cavour. Napoleon was lodged in this palace in 1796.

1256. Panciatic *and* lymphatic *rhymed so pat!*] The dulness and heaviness of the architecture suggested the 'pleasantry'.

1276. *transformations of disgust*], *i.e.* disgusting transformations.

1277. *the snug little Villa.*] See Appendix II.

1278-9.] See note on III. 1622-4.

1304.] Genesis ii. 23.

1305.] Ephesians v. 23-5.

1306-7.] Genesis iii. 16.

1331. *the Commissary.*] See note on IV. 799.

1349. *The long black hair.*] Cf. 1365-7 below, and see note on IV. 456.

1380.] Psalm vii. 12 (Prayer-book Version).

1409. *Sham the worse*], *i.e.* profess the insincere love, do the 'loving acts'.

1413-17.] The eunuch plays the part of the enchantress in an opera founded on the story of Rinaldo and Armida in Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*. The story was regarded as well suited for operatic treatment; in 1711, on his return from his visit to Italy, Handel produced his *Rinaldo* at the Haymarket (see the *Spectator* for March 6 in that year); and Gluck (1714–87) composed an *Armida*.

1420. *two gold zecchines.*] The *zecchino* (*sequin*) was worth about ten shillings. In XII. 74 Browning's Venetian of quality bets in 'gold zecchines'.

1440-45.] Experts to whom this passage has been submitted know nothing of the alleged antipathy between elm and ash. The

Rev. George Sampson tells me that on a walk in North Hampshire he noted ten couples of elm and ash, and that 'in no case did either tree appear to suffer from the other, although some of them had their boughs intermingled'. In one place he has seen an elm supporting an ash, and 'at the point where they rubbed they appeared to have grown together'.

Did Browning take the supposed mutual aversion of elm and ash from some literary or legendary source, not from direct observation?

1451-2. *ought . . . Have let.*] Browning often omits 'to' between 'ought' and an infinitive, as *e.g.* in 411 above, 'I ought in decency confess'. Note here that immediately after 'ought have let' we have 'ought *to* have turned' (1454).

1465. *pulpit-corner on the gospel-side.*] Cf. *The Bishop orders his Tomb*:

> My niche is not so cramped but thence
> One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side.

Pulpits in Catholic as in Protestant churches are sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other; sometimes (as *e.g.* in St. Mark's, Venice) there are pulpits on both sides. I find it stated in Addis and Arnold's *Catholic Dictionary* that the pulpit 'should be placed on the gospel-side, unless that place is already occupied by the Bishop's throne'. Whether there is any special reason why 'on high-days' (1479) the high ecclesiastics to whom Guido is speaking should preach from a pulpit 'on the gospel-side' I do not know.

1469.] Deuteronomy xxv. 4.

1472. *o' the world that's trodden flat*], *i.e.* of the green grass world which, so far as you know it, and so far only, is trodden flat.

1489. *promise, which is air.*] Cf. *Hamlet*, 3. 2. 99, 'I eat the air, promise-crammed'.

1491.] Guido repeats what he has said in 719 *seqq.*

1499. *save the mark!*] The origin of '(God) save [or bless] the mark' is uncertain. It is 'an exclamatory phrase, probably originally serving as a formula to avert an evil omen, and hence used by way of apology when something horrible, disgusting, indecent or profane has been mentioned. In modern literary use (after some of the examples in Shakespeare) it is an expression of impatient scorn appended to a quoted expression or to a statement of fact' (*N.E.D.*).

1509-12.] Isaiah ii. 4.—Guido makes his ecclesiastical critics say that his sword and spear, his 'wrath' and 'ambition', should be used only in the service of the church—'to plough our land' and 'to prune our vines'.

1525-38.] The law and the church, says Guido, professed to advise me to appeal to them—to 'pluck at law's robe' and to 'kiss divinity's buckled shoe'; but after following their professed

advice I came to see that their real advice, conveyed, not in words, but by 'nods and winks', was that I should act for myself, work out my own vengeance. He proceeds to argue that he did not see that this was so when at Castelnuovo; had he avenged himself there, law and church would have acquiesced. When he did see that it was so, and set the right way to work at Rome, he tripped through a foolish and unaccountable omission.

1531-2.] 2 Corinthians iii. 6.

1535-8.] If the inverted commas are rightly placed, the whole of the four lines give the purport of the 'clownish saw', whatever the saw may be. An injured man should avenge himself, and not ask for damages.

1551-2.] Matthew xii. 25, etc.

1561. *Artistry's haunting curse, the Incomplete!*] Browning repeated the line, consciously or unconsciously, twenty years later in his *Beatrice Signorini*, where an artist wonders

> would love's success defeat
> Artistry's haunting curse—the Incomplete ?

1598-9.] Contrast with this what Guido says in his speech in the witness-chamber, V. 1638 *seqq.*

1604. *three only.*] See above, 1585 *seqq.*

1606. *tænia*], tape-worm.

1625-50.] See Introduction to Book XI.

1641. *Sees I want hat on head.*] Suggested by the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263: 'In their haste one of them [*i.e.* the assassins] left his cloak [at the scene of the murders], and Francheschini his hat, which betrayed them afterwards'.

1650. *hamstrings.*] Cf. X. 857.

1656. *the boundary.*] See note on V. 1725.

1663-9.] See the Sentence of the Criminal Ruota of Florence, confirming, on December 24, 1697 ('one week', says Guido, 'before I acted on its hint' on January 2, 1698), the decision of the Commissary of Arezzo (*O.Y.B.* v.-viii., *E.L.* 5-7). The Pope (X. 834-6) speaks of 'that strange shameful judgment . . . just pronounced by the Rota and confirmed by the Granduke'.

1669. *the Stinche.*] See note on IV. 1516.

1680. (*I think I told you*).] See above, 288, and notes on V. 118 and XI. 291-2.

1692. *At the miracle, etc.*] She had received 'twenty-two dagger-wounds', VII. 38; cf. III. 6, 7. See *O.Y.B.* 212, *E.L.* 263.

1704. *Had she been found dead, etc.*] See note on IV. 1416-21.

1707-24.] Compare the ingenious defence which Guido's advocate Arcangeli is represented as saying that he might have made if only Guido had not confessed (VIII. 361-82).

1729-32.] *O.Y.B.* lvii., lviii., *E.L.* 57-9.

1734-53.] See note on VIII. 1590-1601.

1750. *I die last, etc.*] From the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 266; so also the post-Browning pamphlet, *O.Y.B.* 224, *E.L.* 280.

1771. *'twixt crosses leading to a skull*], leading to a place of execution, a Golgotha; the 'crosses' are 'affront and failure'.

1781. *ask Jansenius else.*] The form of the phrase is very common in Browning; cf. *Luria*, Act III. ('with cause enough, consult the Nuncio else'), *The Inn Album*, p. 8 ('Such the sum-total—ask Colenso else') and p. 36, where a parvenu's son says:

House, land,
Money, are things obtainable, you see,
By clever head-work: ask my father else;

St. Martin's Summer, XII. ('Sober is genuine joy . . . Ask else Penelope, Ulysses'). Other examples occur in *Fifine at the Fair*, XLIV., and in *Francis Furini*, XI.

The Jansenists had good reason for the conclusion that papal pretensions had 'grown beyond Earth's bearing'; see note on I. 307.

1784. *than crickets*], *i.e.* than from crickets. Modern English requires the repetition of the preposition after 'than'; Browning usually omits it. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, 2. 2. 71-2:

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords.

1790. *trying all the spirits.*] 1 John iv. 1.

1803-4. *I fold My mantle round me.*] Like Cæsar.

1808-9.] The allusion is to the Second Siege of Vienna by the Turks. The emperor Leopold I. had formed an alliance with Pope Innocent XI. and John Sobieski, king of Poland, and his general Charles Duke of Lorraine put the supreme command into the hands of the king, who on July 14, 1683, routed the Turks under Kara Mustapha, the grand vizier.—The great victory was celebrated by Filicaja in six odes; Wordsworth has a sonnet upon it.

1812. *Why is it that I make such suit to live?*] The rest of the paragraph (1813-1910) gives reasons why he should *not* make such suit. If the Pope pardoned him and he gained a fresh lease of life, (1) he would lose 'the popular sympathy', his friends would look askance at him, his murdered wife would become the idol of the people (1813-33); (2) he would lose all authority in his own family (1834-43); (3) he would have no 'second chance' in life (1844-6), for his new-born son, though it might be supposed that he would be a joy to him, would be no such joy (1847-1902). For all these reasons life is for him no longer worth living (1903-10).

1833. *the mad penitent ladies.*] We read of Quakeresses in America who at the same period 'walked naked through the streets in imitation of the prophet Ezekiel [?], as a sign of the nakedness of the land' (Goldwin Smith, *The United States*, p. 33).

1844. *am I not fifty years of age?*] See note on I. 782-4.

1852. *is not that the phrase?*] I cannot identify the quotation, if we have one here.

1856-95.] Guido has 'no sort of use' for a son (1902), whether his son proves a success in the ordinary sense (1856-68), or a failure—'an ineptitude' (1869-78), or neither a success nor a failure, merely 'the medium measure of a man' (1879-95).

1869. *the blood-offering.*] Explained by 1854-5.

1878. *not quite the fool my father was.*] The records tell us nothing of Guido's father Tommaso (II. 487) except his name (*O.Y.B.* clvii., *E.L.* 162). Browning makes Guido represent him as having been at one time 'great and rich' (V. 352), with friends who were 'proud to cap and kiss their patron's shoe' (V. 48), able to keep a chaplain and to give a handsome present to a scholar for a 'hexastich' (V. 309-15). As Tommaso grew older he became gouty (XI. 2171), and, being easy-natured, luckless, and improvident, he 'let the world slide' (V. 47); 'troubles fell thick on him' (V. 330), and he had to lament the loss of his 'broad lands' (XI. 2170); 'the purse he left held spider-webs' (V. 49). Guido professes to have 'some slight feeling' for a father to whom he admits that he was not a dutiful son (V. 46, XI. 1876-8).

1883-5.] Matthew xxi. 28-30.

1887. *a paul.*] See note on I. 324.

1889. *not on flesh and blood*] as a son would be (1854-5).

1895. *mumping.*] Cf. 699 above, 'nuns a-maundering here and mumping there'. The word here seems to mean 'washily sentimental', as perhaps in Burke, *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, III.: 'our embassy "of shreds and patches", with all its mumping cant'.

1900. *runs*], *i.e.* makes to run.

1903.] He is not sick of 'life's feast', but of its unattainability by himself.

1908. *robins.*] Commenting on the fact that 'the Roman market is rich in game of all kinds', from the wild boar to the sparrow, Story remarks that 'there is nothing an Italian will not shoot, and nothing he will not eat' (*Roba di Roma*, p. 380). See note on V. 364.

1921. *Etruscan, Aretine.*] Arezzo is 'ancientest of Tuscan towns' (V. 142), and the Etruscans claimed to be among the earliest inhabitants of the peninsula.

1922-3.] The reference is to *Æneid* 8. 314-15, where Evander, showing Æneas the site of the future Rome, is made to say:

> Hæc nemora indigenæ Fauni Nymphæque tenebant,
> Gensque virum truncis et duro robore nata.

('In these woods dwelt Fauns and Nymphs sprung from the soil, and a generation of men born of trunks of trees and stubborn oak'.)

1925-7.] Evander says (*Æneid* 8. 352-4) that his Arcadians

believed that they had often seen Jupiter himself on the Capitoline hill, shaking his darkening *ægis* in his hand and gathering the storm-clouds :

> Arcades ipsum
> Credunt se vidisse Iovem, cum sæpe nigrantem
> Ægida concuteret dextra nimbosque cieret.

Αἰγίοχος ('holder of the *aegis*', *i.e.* the shield with which he excites tempests and spreads dismay) is an epithet of Zeus in Homer (*e.g. Odyssey* 24. 164).

1932.] 'The motto' is, I suppose, the second line quoted from Virgil in the note on 1922-3 (*Gens virum, etc.*). For the shield whereto Guido is presently to 'give gules to vary azure' see note on XI. 2161-6.

1934-2003.] Guido maintains that his own faith and that of his so-called Christian visitors are really the same. They believe, as he does, in an all-good, all-wise, all-potent supreme Deity, whom, remembering the passage in the Eighth Æneid (see note on 1925-7), he calls Jove Ægiochus (1936). They follow the Greeks, as he does, in introducing, between this supreme Deity and man, an 'intermediary race' (cf. 'medium-powers', 1969) of agencies into whose precise nature they do not 'pry narrowly'—agencies or powers which recognize man's need to 'live' and to 'enjoy' (cf. 807).—Believing all this contemporary churchmen have excused themselves from emulating the self-sacrifice of the 'age styled primitive and pure', but they mask their compromise, and 'enjoy the old liberty' of the Greeks 'o' the sly' (1996-8); for they feel sure that, though the Christian law may frown, there is nevertheless 'a wink somewhere'.

The passage supplements previous arguments of Guido's; see especially 557 *seqq.*, 798 *seqq.*

1963. *Master Pietro*], the licentious Pietro Aretino; see note on X. 654.

1966.] Guido's advocate Arcangeli is represented as asking 'who hath barred thee primitive revenge?', and as suggesting that 'to bar revenge' is a heresy of the Molinists (VIII. 697, 718 *seqq.*).

1972-4.] The words depend on 'propitiating', and develop the question 'whom?'. 'Himself . . . made' is a relative clause to which 'sins' is the antecedent.

1976. *Revealed to strike Pan dead.*] The reference is to a story told by Plutarch (*De Oraculorum Defectu*, 17); certain voyagers from Greece to Italy during the principate of Tiberius (it was afterwards said, on the very day of the Crucifixion) heard a voice from the Greek shore, bidding them to report that Pan was dead. The story, to which allusion seems to be made in the Hymn of Milton's *Nativity Ode* (stanza XX.), gave birth to Mrs. Browning's *The Dead Pan*. Cf. Théophile Gautier's lines :

Mais l'Olympe cède au Calvaire,
Jupiter au Nazaréen.
Une voix dit 'Pan est mort', etc.

M. Clémenceau, who had lately visited Greece, made much use of the story in his *Le Grand Pan*, which he published in 1896.

1977. *live good days.*] Cf. IX. 413, 'to live and see good days'; Psalm xxxiv. 12, 1 Peter iii. 10.

1991.] Cf. James i. 27; 'his flesh' is of course the antecedent to this relative clause.

2006-7.] Matthew xxvi. 52.

2011-44.] Guido argues that the Pope would have pardoned him if he had urged that his crime had a religious motive.

2029.] Acts xvii. 23.

2033-4. *here at Rome* Romano vivitur more.] The proverbial 'one does at Rome as Rome does' had its origin in a conversation between two famous men in the fourth century. St. Augustin of Hippo asked St. Ambrose of Milan what he should do about fasting on Saturdays, which had become fashionable at Rome, and St. Ambrose answered: *Quando hic sum, non ieiuno Sabato: quando Romæ sum, ieiuno Sabato.*—Browning probably took his *Romano vivitur more* from the lines quoted in the following passage by Jeremy Taylor (*Of Conscience*, c. I., Rule 5):

He that fasted upon a Saturday in Ionia or Smyrna was a schismatic; and so was he who did not fast at Milan or Rome upon the same day, both upon the same reason:

Cum fueris Romæ, Romano vivito more;
Cum fueris alibi, vivito sicut ibi.

2050-53.] The stories of Byblis and Lycaon are told at length by Ovid. The feeble Byblis was in love with her own brother, whom she pursued until 'consumed by her own tears she was changed into a fountain' (*vertitur in fontem*, *Met.* 9. 662-3). The cruel and murderous Lycaon was turned into a wolf (*Met.* 1. 237-9):

Fit lupus, et veteris servat vestigia formæ.
Canities eadem est; eadem violentia vultu;
Idem oculi lucent; eadem feritatis imago est.

2086. *your abnegation of revenge.*] *O.Y.B.* lvii., lviii., *E.L.* 57-8, 59.

2100. "*who did not make myself*".] See note on 941 above.

2118-220] Guido does not care for the pure design of the other-worldly Fra Angelico, the Dominican 'Monk' of San Marco at Florence, but for 'the mighty spirit of Venetian colour, consummated in Titian'.—He could, indeed, have endured the pale, timid, 'holy' Pompilia, had she come to him with a 'selvage cloth of gold' round her whiteness, *i.e.* had she brought him wealth (2125-81); but gold, though it 'will do', is after all but 'sordid

muck' (2182); what he wanted in a wife was 'colour', unscrupulous passion; he wanted, not a Pompilia, but a Lucrezia Borgia (2183-2220).

2122.] Guido's hatred for the whiteness of Pompilia recalls that of Cenci for his son Bernardo in Shelley's tragedy—

> Thy milky meek face makes me sick with hate—

(*The Cenci*, Act II. Scene 1).

2128-9.] Is the illustration taken from some ecclesiastical vestment?

2161-6.] Cf. the description of the arms of the Franceschini in XII. 822-4:

> Shield, Azure, on a Triple Mountain, Or,
> A Palm-tree, Proper, whereunto is tied
> A Greyhound, Rampant, striving in the slips.

The description follows closely the water-colour drawing of which I have spoken on p. xxi.

2165-7.] It occurs to Guido that the Franceschini arms, which symbolize the greed of the family (2163), also symbolize its ill-fortune.

2184. *those Olimpias bold, those Biancas brave.*] Unscrupulous and passionate heroines of Italian romance. The author of the B. and H. Notes says that the Olimpia here meant is the wife of Bireno in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, and that the Bianca is the wife of Fazio as presented in Dean Milman's *Fazio*. The latter identification will hardly commend itself to readers of Milman's play.

2185. *worth Ormuz' wealth.*] Ormuz, on an island at the mouth of the Persian gulf, a mart for diamonds and pearls. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 2. 2, 'the wealth of Ormus and of Ind'; Marvell, *Song of the Emigrants in Bermuda*, 20, 'Jewels more rich than Ormus shows'.

2202. *Delilah.*] Judges xvi.

2204. *call-bird*], *i.e.* decoy-bird.

2212. *Straight from the sun.*] Circe, the sorceress of the *Odyssey*, who with her wand turned the companions of Odysseus into swine, was the daughter of Helios (the sun).

2214. *O thou Lucrezia, etc.*] Lucrezia Borgia, daughter of Pope Alexander VI. and sister of Cæsar Borgia, who, according to scandal and to Guido's suggestion here, was also her lover; she was universally believed to be just such an infamously passionate woman as Guido would have wished his wife to be. She has, however, been whitewashed by the researches of modern historians; Dr. Garnett calls her 'kindly . . . and somewhat apathetic', and declares that 'nothing could be less like the real Lucrezia than the Lucrezia of the dramatists and romancers' (*Cambridge Modern History*, i.

p. 239; cf. Symonds, *The Age of the Despots*, pp. 328-32).—'The figure of the Pope's daughter between her terrible father and brother, in part their terrible victim and an object of pity, in part a seductive siren, and lastly a penitent Magdalen, exercises a charm on the imagination by the mystery which surrounds her, and in the obscurity of which guilt and innocence struggle for supremacy' (Gregorovius).

2235. *Was this strict inquisition, etc.*] Guido hints here and in 2341 *seqq.* that the Cardinal had his 'affianced bride' put out of the way. The idea was perhaps suggested to Browning by a passage in his friend Story's *Graffiti d' Italia*, p. 128, where the servant of an aspiring ecclesiastic has a like suspicion about a 'tall, majestic, fierce-eyed girl'

> who disappeared
> Some ten years back, and God knows how or why.

2254. *kill you!*], *i.e.* and by killing me destroy your chance of becoming Pope; see note on 2265-7 below.

2258. *must die next year.*] Cf. XII. 38. Innocent, however, lived for two years and a half more—till September 27, 1700.

2259-64.] Cf. 2339 below, where Guido makes a correct forecast of the result of the next papal election. With his account of 'how the chances are supposed' compare XII. 42-8 (see note on the passage), where Browning's Venetian of rank makes a wager which he will lose. 'Seventh' (2264) should be 'Eighth'.

2265-7.] Guido catches at any argument, good or bad, which he thinks may conceivably influence his visitors to attempt to save his life, but he cannot deliberately suppose that the Cardinal will be moved by his suggestion that he will be able, if spared, to 'give his friend a lift' with the Curia when a new pope is to be elected. He knows and admits quite freely that he is of no account at Rome, has been an utter failure as a hanger-on to the skirts of the Church (see *e.g.* V. 367 *seqq.*).

2279. *whose death insults the Emperor.*] It appears from the letter in *O.Y.B.* cexxxvi., 338 (*E.L.* 237) that 'recommendations of great consequence' had been made to the Pope to spare Guido; the Ambassador of the Emperor spoke specially on the point on Tuesday, February 18, 'as he told me', says the writer, 'the day before yesterday' (*i.e.* on Thursday, February 20). Browning makes a delightful use of this letter in XII. 94-9, where his Venetian writes to a friend that 'Martinez, the Cæsarian Minister',

> used his best endeavours to spare blood,
> And strongly pleaded for the life 'of one',
> Urged he, 'I may have dined at table with!'—
> He will not soon forget the Pope's rebuff,
> —Feels the slight sensibly, I promise you!

2280. *outrages the Louis you so love.*] For the 'love' of Innocent

for Louis XIV. see Appendix VII. If French influence was exerted at all in Guido's affair, it was probably exerted *against* that of the Emperor's ambassador; the Venetian of rank is made to declare that it was so exerted (XII. 110-12).

2281-3. *enemies . . . coercive.*] See note on 2265-7, and observe the incongruity of the words with what immediately follows.

2290.] He continues after waiting for an answer which has not come.

2301-2.] It has often been remarked that ignoble characters in Browning sometimes express noble thoughts (*e.g.* in *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, *Mr. Sludge the Medium*, *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*, *Fifine at the Fair*; cf. 2375-86, below). As Mr. Chesterton says (*Browning*, p. 192): 'There is nothing that deserves more emphatically to be called a speciality of Browning. . . . In his poetry praise and wisdom were perfected not only out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, but out of the mouths of swindlers and snobs'.

2315-17.] It would be a consolation to Guido at the moment of death to have crunched up his adversaries—in argument.

2329. *kind work o' the wine and myrrh.*] Mark xv. 23, 'they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not'; upon which Professor Swete remarks: 'Wine drugged with myrrh was usually offered to condemned malefactors, through the charity, it is said, of the women of Jerusalem, the intention being to deaden the sense of pain' (*St. Mark*, p. 379). Guido's wine and myrrh may be metaphorical, but the fortifying sip of Velletri in V. 4-6 suggests that they may be literal.

2333. *Tozzi*], the successor of Malpighi (VII. 423) as physician to the Pope; see IX. 1268, XII. 40.

2338. *of seventy near.*] In 1586 Sixtus V. fixed the number of cardinals at seventy, but there are usually some vacancies.

2339.] See above, 2259-64, and note.

2341-5.] See note on 2235.

2346. *Martinez*], 'the Cæsarian Minister' (XII. 94).

2347. *Stops that with* veto.] The claim of the Emperor to an absolute veto on papal elections was granted to Otto the Great by the citizens of Rome in the year 963. Such 'a right of exclusion' (*ius exclusivæ*) has often been exercised by the Emperor and other secular potentates with the acquiescence of the conclave; its exercise was denounced by Pius X. in 1904, who declared that *id si aliquoties accidit, apostolicæ tamen sedi probatum est nunquam.* See Mirbt, *Quellen*, p. 404.

2375-86] See note on 2301-2.

2376.] Cf. George Eliot's *The Legend of Jubal*, where the consciousness of death is represented as the stimulating motive of the arts.

2391-2.] I recognized on earth the fallibility of the Pope, I

shall not in 'another world' impute that fallibility to God, but shall recognize an authority to which I must bow.

2410. *the Athenian who died so.*] Themistocles. A rumour that he poisoned himself is noted by Thucydides (I. 138); the legend that he died by drinking bull's blood is first mentioned by Aristophanes (*Knights*, 83-4).

2414. *Who are these, etc.*] The 'Company of Death'; see note on I. 1311. 'Descend my stair' is a slip; we read in the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265) that when taken off to execution '*the condemned* were made to go downstairs', and Sir F. Treves was assured, on a visit to the New Prisons, that there were no underground cells there (Treves, p. 137). Cf. XII. 132, 'the Count was led down, hoisted up on car'.

2425.] Guido hesitates between claiming that he is a subject of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and admitting the Pope's jurisdiction.

2427. *Pompilia.*] On this famous invocation see Appendix X.

BOOK XII.—THE BOOK AND THE RING

INTRODUCTION

It has been suggested, with a confident 'surely'[1], that the poet should have ended his whole poem with the startling invocation with which he ends his eleventh Book, but a measured and controlled ending is required by acknowledged canons of the poetic art and recommended by the practice of its greatest exponents. Be that as it may, the suggestion of many critics that Book XII. might well have been dispensed with is altogether unacceptable. For this brilliant epilogue contains some of Browning's deepest thought and finest verse; much of it is alive with his gayest humour; it displays throughout his invention in its fullest activity. He tells us in its second paragraph that

> Of all reports that were or may have been
> Concerning those the day[2] killed or let live

he counts four only, and he proceeds to give us them; but fortunately he lays more stress on reports 'that may have been' (and were not) than on reports 'that were'.

The reports that were, of which alone he might have counted four, are as follows: (1) a letter from Arcangeli at Rome to a lawyer at Florence who, it appears, was professionally interested in Guido's concerns - the Francesco Cencini who collected documents relating to the murder-trial, supplied them with a title-page and a table of contents, and bound them up into the Yellow Book; (2) a second

[1] Sharp, *Life of Robert Browning*, p. 126.
[2] The day, of course, of the executions, February 22, 1698.

letter, from another Roman lawyer, Gaspare del Torto, to this same Cencini; (3) a third letter, also to Cencini, from yet another lawyer, Carlo Antonio Ugolinucci. All these are business-letters, written, on the evening of the fateful February 22, to inform Cencini that the attempt to save Guido on the ground of his 'clericate' has failed, that he and his rustic confederates have indeed been executed. (4) The fourth report is the valuable Italian pamphlet, written probably after the death of Innocent XII. in 1700, which I have followed Professor Hodell in calling the Secondary Source; it carries on the story to its end upon the scaffold.

Of the four reports, real or imagined, which Browning counts and gives the first (*a*) is a letter alleged to have been written, immediately after the executions, to a correspondent at Venice by a lively Venetian visitor at Rome; it is based partly upon the real reports but is mainly of the poet's invention. The writer is represented as interested in various matters, personal, social and political: he speaks of the entries in his betting book, of the 'prodigious gaiety' of Carnival, of the Pope's ill-health, of the prospects of the succession, of the probable condemnation of Fénelon, of the rivalry of the French and Austrian ambassadors; but what interests him most keenly is the *cause célèbre* of the day and its *dénoûment*. The second report (*b*) is a letter from Arcangeli to Cencini —the real business-letter to the lawyer with a fictitious and delightfully intimate postscript to the personal friend; in the former Arcangeli announces what 'The Holiness of our Lord the Pope' has 'judged inexpedient', in the latter, dismissing correctitude, he stigmatizes the 'spite' which has prompted the workings of 'Somebody's thick headpiece', and proceeds to develop some of the most familiar *motifs* of Book VIII.—the writer's antipathy to his more successful rival, his complacent pride in the precocity of his over-indulged son. In the third report (*c*), a wholly fictitious letter of Bottini's, alleged to have been written to 'no matter who' on February 24, we have in the same way some final touches added to Browning's portrait of that ambitious and not too scrupulous person; with this letter the writer is represented as enclosing

what I take to be Browning's fourth report (*d*), some paragraphs, 'smoking from the press', of a sermon said to have been preached at San Lorenzo church, on Sunday, February 23, by Fra Celestino the Augustinian, Pompilia's confessor. The sermon does not meet the reader's legitimate expectation by adding to his knowledge 'concerning those the day killed or let live', but it adds a needful note of solemnity to this Book XII. It would not be fitting that wit and humour should be altogether dominant at the end of 'the tragic piece'; their dominance is checked by this 'magnificent passage, in which the fine dignity of the verse fitly matches the deep truth of the preacher's monitions'[1].

As he neared the end of his labours Browning put his noblest powers to play in this impressive sermon; what is its 'deep truth'? Professor Henry Jones, in an interesting chapter upon 'Browning's Optimism', maintains that 'the poet's purpose, constant throughout the whole poem'[2], is, if I understand the Professor rightly, to draw from the story the comforting moral that even in this world truth and goodness may be trusted to triumph. That is not the moral drawn from it by Fra Celestino, who, like the Pope in Book X., 'confronts the long perplexity and entanglement of circumstances with the' facile—Lord Morley called it 'fatuous'—'optimism which insists that somehow justice and virtue do rule in the world'. If, as seems certain, the Pope and the Augustinian speak for Browning, 'the whole poem', whatever it may be besides, 'is', in Lord Morley's words, 'a parable of the feeble and half-hopeless struggle which truth has to make against the ways of the world. That in this particular case truth and justice did win some pale sort of victory does not weaken the force of the lesson'[3]. If the fact that Guido met in the end with his deserts makes the cause of right a decisively *victrix causa* in the story of *The Ring and the*

[1] Quoted from an article by the Editor in the *Fortnightly Review*, March 1, 1869, p. 339. The high praise which Lord Morley gave, a month after the first appearance of Book XII., to the diction of the sermon is even more fully due to it as revised for later editions; see Appendix XI.

[2] *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 90. See the Introduction to Book VII.

[3] *Fortnightly Review*, *loc. cit.* Lord Morley says in his *Recollections* (i. p. 133) that his interpretation of the poem 'gave some pleasure to Browning himself'.

Book, we should be justified in pronouncing *Hamlet* optimistic because among the corpses which strew the stage at the end of its last scene that of Claudius is one. —Browning's temperament was undoubtedly optimistic, and expressions of confident optimism are very frequent in his poetry. But critics who write of him as a teacher with a message and a mission seem sometimes to forget that men of genius 'see things in different aspects and many lights', and that 'inconsistencies' may be 'the marks of their greatness'[1].

Speaking of the second part—the postscript—of his second report (*b*) Browning declares that it is 'extant just as plainly' as the first part

> you know where,
> Whence came the other stuff, went, you know how,
> To make the Ring that's all but round and done[2].

He might have said the same of most of (*a*) and of all (*c*) and (*d*); they come, as we have seen, from the poet's fancy, they are part of the alloy of which he speaks at the beginning of the poem. He ends by reminding us once more of the ring of his metaphor, and of the 'posy'[3] which he engraved upon it; gracefully acknowledging Tommaseo's tribute to his 'lyric Love', whose 'rare gold ring of verse' linked 'our England to his Italy'.

NOTES

(*N.B.—The numbering of the lines in the notes to this Book, after line 696, is that of the second and all subsequent editions, but not that of the first edition. See 'Lines Added' in Appendix XI.*)

2. *roared and soared.*] See note on IX. 1039-40.

11. *composite*] =composed; the only instance quoted in the *N.E.D.* for this 'rare' use of the word is from Mrs. Browning's *The Greek Christian Poets*: 'a dithyrambic ode . . . composite of fantastic epithets'.

12. *the Wormwood Star.*] Revelations viii. 10, 11 (R.V.): 'And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning

[1] The words quoted occur in a newspaper report of a speech made in February 1919 by Lord Bryce on the occasion of the Ruskin centenary.

[2] XII. 236-8.

[3] I. 1390.

as a torch, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood (ὁ Ἄψινθος): and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter'. In 827-9 the Guido-rocket, so finely described here, is identified with the Wormwood Star.—Mrs. Browning makes use of this star in the famous passage which describes Savonarola's appeal to Lorenzo the Magnificent (*Casa Guidi Windows*, Part I.); cf. *Aurora Leigh*, Book V. (p. 214).

20. *the main streaks*], described in the letters and the sermon-extract which follow; cf. 210 below.

26. *the first that comes.*] It is one of those 'that may have been', not of those 'that were'; see (*a*) in the Introduction to Book XII.

29. *busy idleness*], the *strenua inertia* of Horace (*Epp.* 1. 11. 28); Wordsworth speaks of 'worldlings revelling in the fields Of strenuous idleness' (*Poems of Sentiment and Reflection*, xxx.; cf. *The Prelude*, 4. 378).

31. *at our end of Carnival.*] Inaccurate; see note on VIII. 283-6.

34-8.] The strangers were too previous; Innocent XII. lived till September 27, 1700. Cf. XI. 2258.

39-40.] For Malpichi (or Malpighi) see VII. 423; for Tozzi see IX. 1268, XI. 2333.

42-8.] It is interesting to compare the Venetian's with Guido's account of 'how the chances are supposed' for the succession (cf. XI. 2260-63, 2338-9, 2346-7); the Venetian, unlike Guido, puts his money on the wrong horse. Of the names of other possible starters mentioned in these accounts only that of Colloredo appears in the valuable *Relazione* in which the envoy Erizzo (see Appendix VII.) described the proceedings of the conclave. It should be remembered that both Browning's prophets speak in expectation of an immediate vacancy; when Innocent died two and a half years later the situation was changed. Colloredo was then passed over as too austere, others as too violent, others as too mild, others again as having too many nephews; the Austrian candidate, who started as the favourite, was excluded by French influence. On the death of Charles II. of Spain (November 3, 1700—a month after the death of Innocent) the Cardinals, 'manifestly touched', says Erizzo, 'by the hand of God', cast their eyes on Cardinal Albani, who openly approved the determination of Louis XIV. to accept the Spanish succession for the house of Bourbon (Ranke, *History of the Popes*, ii. p. 428). Albani was elected on November 16, the conclave having deliberated for less than two months: it had taken five to elect Innocent in 1691.

42-3.] That Cardinal Spada was 'actual Minister' should have cautioned the Venetian against 'wagering on his head', for, as a contemporary writer observed, *son emploi de premier ministre*

porte, dit-on, une espèce d'exclusion pour le pontificat. Bien des gens ne veulent pas dans cette place un cardinal trop accoutumé à gouverner les affaires par lui-même (*Mélanges historiques*, iv. p. 711).

52. *That Custom-house he built upon the bank.*] Cf. 89 below, 'that Dogana-by-the-Bank he built'. Innocent built a Dogana *di Terra* in the Piazza di Pietra, far away from the Tiber; it is now the Exchange, but it retains its old name. I know nothing of his *maritime* Custom-house.

53. *Naples born.*] Cf. IX. 372-3.

54-5.] See X. 284-6.

57. *lies in stupor, etc.*] Cf. 299 below, X. 1246-7, VIII. 1458-60:

> They say, the Pope has one half-hour, in twelve,
> Of something like a moderate return
> Of the intellectuals,—never much to lose!

62. *twice in one reign.*] I cannot discover what reason the Pope would have had for proclaiming a Jubilee in December 1698. His Jubilee in 1694 commemorated, according to the poem (II. 539-40), his eightieth birthday; but he was born in March 1615.

—. *ope the Holy Doors.*] See note on III. 567.

63-8.] For the King's 'fresh orders', the condemnation of Fénelon (which the Venetian expects too confidently), and the 'wry face' of Cardinal Bouillon (cf. line 112) see Appendix VII. *ad fin.*

74. *gold zecchines.*] See note on XI. 1420.

78. *the conviction of all Rome.*] See note on XI. 33-8.

81. *that old enmity to Austria, etc.*] As a partisan of France Innocent was of course unfriendly to Austria (see Appendix VII.); Martinez, the Austrian ambassador, had been exerting himself to save Guido (see note on XI. 2279 and 94 *segq.* below).

90.] Cf. X. 244 *segq.* and Appendix VII. With 'the crowd he suffers question' cf. X. 794, 'he suffered cling', XI. 1272, 'did not suffer them subside'.

104. palchetto.] See note on 115 below.

106-9.] See note on I. 350-60.

114. *at the edge of the Three Streets*], *i.e.* of the long streets which radiate southwards from the Piazza: the Via del Babuino, the Corso, the Via di Ripetta.

115.] From the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265 — 'Many stands [*palchetti*] were constructed for the accommodation of those curious to see such a terrible execution, and so great was the concourse of people that some windows fetched as much as six dollars each'. For the erection of these wooden stands in the Piazza del Popolo on other occasions see Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 453. A chapter in Dumas's *Monte-Cristo* (ii. c. xiv.) gives a lively picture of the incidents of a nineteenth-century execution in the Piazza, with *mannaia*, the highly-rented windows, the

Confraternity of Death, the jostling crowd, and all the rest of it. Dumas says that the scaffold was erected at the point where the views from the three radiating streets meet.

117. *our Envoy Contarini.*] See Appendix VII.

119. *'tis four-and-twenty hours ago*], *i.e.* late in the evening of February 21.

124. *ere cock-crow.*] According to the Secondary Source 'at the eighth hour', *i.e.* about 2 A.M. on February 22.

125-8.] From the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265: 'They [Guido and his accomplices] were assisted by Abate Panciatichi and Cardinal Acciajoli, nor did they delay in preparing themselves to die well'. See Introduction to Book XI. *ad fin.*

129. *the Company of Death.*] See note on I. 1311.

130-31.] One of Cencini's correspondents writes that *the executions took place* 'after dinner' (*doppo il pranzo*) (*O.Y.B.* ccxxxix., *E.L.* 238); Browning gives 'after dinner' as the time of *the arrival of the Company of Death* at the prison. He proceeds to make a very careless slip by saying that the Company arrived 'at sunset', having already said that they arrived 'at twenty hours' (*i.e.* about 2 P.M.), following in this latter statement the author of the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265). (For 'the way they reckon here' see note on IV. 1371.)

If the Company of Death had arrived at the prison 'at sunset', it would have been dark before the executions took place, after the long procession through the densely packed streets to the Piazza del Popolo (see note on line 139).

132. *was led down.*] See note on XI. 2414.

133. *heinousest.*] See note on I. 205.

135. *His intrepidity, nay nonchalance.*] From the Secondary Source, which speaks of Guido's *intrepidezza* and *sangue freddo* on the way to execution as having been 'the wonder of all' (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265).

139. *the New Prisons.*] See note on V. 324-5.—The procession did not go by the shortest route (viz. along the river-side and by the Via di Ripetta) to the place of execution; it went 'by the longest way' (I. 1325), 'by the most densely populated streets' (*O.Y.B.* 224, *E.L.* 280), for greater effect on the people of Rome.—Browning took his details from the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265-6); the route of the procession at starting has been somewhat obscured by the construction of the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, but can be followed with a little guesswork.

141. *Where was stuck up, etc.*] What Bacon called 'pasquils or satires, to make sport'—they are usually and more correctly called pasquinades—owe their name to a certain Pasquino, a Roman tailor of the 15th century, 'skilful in his trade and still more skilful in his epigrams'. A broken statue, at the corner of the Palazzo Braschi, by the Piazza Navona, was opposite his shop, and to this

statue his name was transferred after his death; for it became the custom to fix upon its pedestal witty criticisms after his manner upon current affairs. From these pasquinades it has been said that a history of Rome might be composed. Good selections from such of them as survive are given by Story (*Roba di Roma*, c. xi.) and by Hare (*Walks in Rome*, ii. pp. 126-8).

Browning promises us a pasquinade of his own manufacture, but the promise, unfortunately, is not kept (see lines 208-9).

158. *Twelve were Tern Quatern.*] See the interesting account of the Papal state-lotteries in Story, *Roba di Roma*, pp. 129-40. Stakes were made on the drawing of particular numbers from one to ninety; a ticket-holder could stake on one, two, three, four, or five numbers, and five numbers were drawn; a sum staked on three numbers was a *terno*, on four a *quaterno*. Story gives further details, but they do not fully explain the present passage; he notices superstitions about numbers attending this kind of gambling and tells us of women praying at Christmas-tide to the *Santo Bambino* to this effect: 'cure our diseases; lower the water of the Tiber; heal Lisa's leg; send us a good carnival; give us a winning *terno* in the lottery' (*op. cit.* p. 81). Cf. *Aurora Leigh*, Book VII. (p. 319), where a crone prays the Madonna that she may 'win a tern in Thursday's lottery'.

The lotteries were a valuable instrument of papal finance. Innocent XII., as Browning says, forbade them, and his example was followed by Benedict XIII. (1724–30) and Clement XII. (1730–1740), but they were revived soon afterwards. A writer during Innocent's reign denounced them as 'an invention of bitter malice to suck the blood of imprudent gamesters'.

173-204.] Taken or developed (except 182-6) from the Secondary Source (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 266).

182. *at Saint Mary's opposite.*] Three churches of St. Mary face the Piazza del Popolo; the speaker refers to the most important of the three, S. Maria del Popolo at the north end of the Piazza, not to either of 'the two Twins, resembling one another as well as placed near one another' (Burnet, *Some Letters*, p. 237) at its south end.

184. Umbilicus], 'navel'; see 745-6 below.

194.] Though the Secondary Source, which is here quoted, says that Guido was fifty when executed, we know that he was in fact only just forty; see note on I. 782-4.

210.] See line 20 above, with the note.

215-19.] See Introduction to Book XII.

222-4.] For the game of Tarocs see note on VI. 349. In a letter written in September 1868 (shortly before the publication of the first instalment of *The Ring and the Book*) Barone Kirkup told W. M. Rossetti that he had lately sent Browning 'some excellent stories of gamesters' from a dialogue on cards by Pietro

Aretino; 'Browning', he added, 'is writing a poem relating to Arezzo in which gambling will make a great figure' (W. M. Rossetti, *Rossetti Papers*, pp. 367-8). Gambling does *not* 'make a great figure' in *The Ring and the Book*, but Browning had clearly been inquisitive about Italian card-games in connection with his poem, and his inquisitiveness on a subject which would play a very small part therein is a good instance of his immense care about the smallest details of his local colouring.

227. *my four-years'-intimate.*] For the importance of these words see Appendix I.

229. *the "whole position of the case".*] See I. 121-31.

236-8. See I. 461-3 and Introduction to Book XII.

239-88.] These fifty lines are partly a literal translation, partly a somewhat amplified paraphrase, of Arcangeli's real letter (see Introduction). A facsimile of the MS. of the letter will be found in the illustrated edition of the poem.

245. *on Tuesday last.*] An addition of Browning's, taken from the letter of del Torto (*O.Y.B.* ccxxxvii., *E.L.* 237).

258. *by his particular cheirograph.*] See note on I. 346.

259. *To derogate.*] Arcangeli's phrase is *derogare ad ogni Privilegio Clericale*; the verb he uses might be read as *denegare*, but the action of the Pope is described as a *derogatio* (=annulment) by another of Cencini's correspondents.

264. *to do Pasquini good.*] See note on X. 964.

268-9. *Decollate by mere due of privilege, etc.*] Cf. I. 125-6, 'put to death By heading or hanging as befitted ranks'. 'By mere due of privilege' is an addition of Browning's to Arcangeli's real letter; the author of the post-Browning pamphlet says that death by *mannaia* ('heading') was conceded to Guido 'rather out of respect for his being in clerical orders than for any other reason' (*O.Y.B.* 223, *E.L.* 278).—'Decollate' represents the *colla Decollazione* of the original; the 'Decollation' of John the Baptist was a holiday at Eton in the sixteenth century.

271. *exemplarity.*] The Italian *esemplarità*: this is not in the original, but del Torto says that Guido died *con coraggio e esemplarità.*

273. *nor its blue banner blush to red.*] Cf. 822 below.

277. Quantum est hominum venustiorum.] Though this quotation from Catullus (3. 2) is correctly paraphrased in the next line ('The nice and cultivated everywhere') Dr. Berdoe felt so sure of his Latin that he made nonsense of the passage by translating, 'how much happier were the men!' In some *Corrigenda* circulated afterwards he substituted 'as far as such persons could express such feelings'! The Browning Society should have checked the vagaries of its most active member, who could write such a note as '"Quid multa?" what penalty?' (*Browning Cyclopædia*, p. 325).

286-7.] Contrast this with 'too poor to fee a better' in I. 179.

288. *I confirm myself.*] *Mi raffermo*, I declare myself again.

291-390.] This delightful postscript is Browning's own; in lines 325-6 he takes a hint from one of the other letters.

291. Hactenus senioribus!] Probably from Cicero. Arcangeli seems to mean 'So far for the grave *Signori* our clients'.

294-5. *what folks call Pisan assistance.*] *Soccorso di Pisa* is proverbial for 'aid that comes too late'. During the siege of Jerusalem in the First Crusade the Genoese, who managed the besieging machines, wanted help from the Pisans; but the Pisan fleet was delayed by contrary winds and they did not appear till after the victory had been won (July 1099). Compare Browning's use (in *Aristophanes' Apology*, p. 125) of 'Plataian help' as proverbial for help that comes in time—an allusion to the thousand whom the Platæans, while others loitered, sent to help the Athenians at Marathon.

299. *Somebody's thick headpiece.*] Cf. 57 above.

301.] Cf. XI. 430:

> age never slips
> The chance of shoving youth to face death first.

311. *the indecent change.*] See note on I. 350-60.

316.] Cf. X. 2053.

319.] Song of Solomon ii. 15.

325-6.] The 'Matrimonial Cause and the Case of Gomez', to which Browning makes both Arcangeli and Bottini (657 below) refer, had nothing to do with either of them. They are mentioned by the lawyer Ugolinucci as a matter concerning himself and Cencini (*O.Y.B.* ccxxxix.-xl., *E.L.* 238).

327. Reliqua differamus in crastinum], *sc. diem*; from Cicero, *Rep.* 2. 44. 4: *sed in hunc diem hactenus: reliqua differamus in crastinum* ('but enough of all this for to-day; let's put off the rest till to-morrow').

328. *estafette.*] Italian *staffetta*, courier.

331. *fat-chaps Hyacinth*], our old acquaintance of Book VIII.

333. *I promised him, etc.*] See note on VIII. 1352.

338. hoc malim.] More polite than 'That I prefer' (*hoc malo*). Arcangeli is proud of his eight-year-old's idiomatic use of the subjunctive mood; cf. VIII. 7, '*Quies* me *cum subjunctivo* (I could cry)'.

341. *the peacock-fans.*] These fans (It. *flabelli*) were borne on each side of the Pope during certain great functions, *e.g.* on Christmas Day, when he sat in the loggia of St. Peter's to give his blessing *urbi et orbi*. Mrs. Browning makes a humorous use of the fans in her *Christmas Gifts*, where the Italian tricolour is represented as being brought to the Pope, as he 'sits in St. Peter's chair', on the Christmas Day following the war of 1859:—

O mystic tricolor bright!
The Pope's heart quailed like a man's;
The Cardinals froze at the sight,
Bowing their tonsures hoary:
And the eyes in the peacock-fans
Winked at the alien glory.

The Abbé Martigny, in his *Dictionnaire des Antiquités chrétiennes* (*s.v. flabellum*), says that the peacock symbolizes the saint, uncorrupted by vice, because according to the opinion of antiquity the flesh of the peacock is incorruptible; the saint shines with the varied brilliancy of his virtues as the peacock with that of its feathers. With respect to the Pope the Abbe adds: *on conçoit que l'Église ait voulu que, comme le Dieu qu'il représente sur la terre, il apparaisse aux yeux des populations respectueuses entouré de ces plumes de paon qui sont la vive image des séraphins d'Isaïe* (VI. 2).

357-8. *He's long since out of Cæsar, etc.*] The young Hyacinth 'verges on Virgil', and 'shall attack me Terence' (VIII. 78, 137).

361. *A Bartolus-cum-Baldo.*] See I. 224, note.

367-8. Adverti supplico humiliter Quod.] From Arcangeli's first pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* xii., *E.L.* 13); it means 'I humbly beg it may be noted that . . .', not of course (as Dr. Berdoe mistranslates) 'I have observed, I humbly beg that . . .', whatever this may mean.

376. *old Somebody.*] Cf. 299 above.

391-750.] Both the letter (406-58, 647-750) and the sermon-extracts sent with it (459-646) were invented by the poet.

392.] Cf. I. 1197 *seqq.*

394. *on the Monday.*] February 24.

410-12.] Bottini employs the same metaphor in IX. 1419-20.

414-16.] Compare what Arcangeli says in VIII. 404 *seqq.*

436-40.] See note on VIII. 276.

437. *dandiprat*]—(1) a small coin, worth about 3d.; (2) a dwarf or pigmy; (3) an urchin (as in Scott, *Kenilworth*, c. xxvi.). So *N.E.D.*, adding: 'etymology unknown and sense-development uncertain'.

439. *save-all.*] 'A contrivance to hold a candle-end in a candlestick while burning, so that it may burn to the end' (*N.E.D.*). Arcangeli throws no light upon the case and thus gives his pert junior the chance of exhibiting *his* light.

445. *a stone.*] The first edition has 'a man', the second 'a stoic'; see Appendix XI.

451. *which proved a treasure.*] See II. 14-15.

453-4.] Romans iii. 4.

461-2. *doling praise To innocency.*] The Court did *not* dole praise to innocency, as Bottini notes below (694-6):—

the Court
Found Guido guilty,—but pronounced no word
About the innocency of his wife.

466. *who add*], *i.e.* to some such words as 'God sleeps'.

469. *to fools.*] 'To' should surely be 'from'.

472-3.] See Introduction to Book XII. on this optimistic 'conclusion'.

479.] The 'culver' is here distinguished from 'Noah's dove', but the latter is often called 'the culver', as *e.g.* in Maundevile's *Travels*: 'the storye of Noe . . . when that the culver broughte the Braunche of Olyve'.

496 *seqq.*] There was much less secrecy and mystery about the catacombs in early times than the preacher supposed. Their approaches were at first open and unconcealed, but 'in consequence of imperial edicts of persecution at certain periods during the third century it became necessary to withdraw them as much as possible from the public eye, and for this purpose new and difficult entrances were effected'. See Northcote and Brownlow, *Roma sotterranea*, i. pp. 14, 15 and elsewhere; Boissier, *Promenades archéologiques, Rome et Pompéi*, c. iii., especially p. 184.

504. *their idol-god, an Ass!*] Tertullian devotes a chapter to proving 'that the Christians do not adore the head of an ass, as is cast in their teeth', and explains the origin of the reproach by a reference to Tacitus (*Hist.* 5. 3, 4), who asserts that the Jews consecrated an effigy of an ass in their sanctuary, because on their expulsion from Egypt a herd of wild asses had guided them, when distressed by want of water in the desert, to an oasis with abundant springs. The story, Tertullian supposes, was told of the Christians 'because we are near akin to the Jewish religion'.—A famous *graffito*, discovered in 1856 in what was probably a guard-room in the palace of the Cæsars on the Palatine, represents a crucified ass, worshipped by a man who is presumably a Christian; it bears the inscription ΑΛΕΞΑΜΕΝΟC CEBETE (*i.e.* σέβεται) ΘΕΟΝ. 'Alexamenus worships his God'. See the interesting note, with a reproduction of the *graffito*, in *Roma sotterranea*, ii. pp. 345-52.

520.] Many terra-cotta lamps have been found in the catacombs; some of them bear the monogram ☧, *i.e.* XP, the first two letters of the Greek Χριστῷ, 'for Christ'. See *Roma sotterranea*, i. pp. 290-93. There is a collection of these and other treasures from the catacombs in the Christian Museum of the Lateran.

521.] Vessels of glass and terra-cotta containing blood have often been found in the catacombs. See *Roma sotterranea*, ii. pp. 330-43, where illustrations of some of these vessels are given.

522. *palm-branch.*] Palm-branches (Revelations vii. 9-14) were often scrawled in the catacombs.

525.] Hebrews xi. 38.

526-30.] Just as Noah's dove, says the preacher, was the one survivor of many 'dove-like things as dear', just as the crevice revealed that the catacombs contained one martyr while countless others remained unrevealed, so it may be that while Pompilia's

purity has been vindicated, many other 'chaste and noble fames lie strangled'.

531-53.] I have shown, he continues, that human report often vilifies the good (439-530); it as often glorifies the bad. In the burnished statues of the human deities, on which you gaze with awe, there may lurk scorpions and centipedes; for all their brilliancy these so-called deities are demons and devils. It is only now and then that on a sudden, as it were by an earthquake, God shows good and bad in their true light.

538. *lurks a centipede.*] An obvious improvement on the reading of the earlier editions, 'lo, a cockatrice!'

539-40.] Fra Celestino speaks of the old Greek and Roman gods in the language of the primitive church.

551-2.] 'Despairing shriek' is the object of 'made', 'triumphant hate' of 'evidenced'; see note on VI. 319-20.

554-609.] The paragraph develops the thoughts of the previous paragraph, and gives a fresh turn to the preacher's conclusion.—Observe that the 56 lines form a single sentence, which needs careful reading but leads up most effectively to the conclusion of the argument (see note on V. 1957-82). The dependent clauses, beginning respectively with 'as ye become spectators' (554-61), 'as ye behold' (562-5), '[as ye] mark' (565-73), 'as ye watch' (573-9), '[as ye] hear' (580-84), 'when ye find' (585-97), are summed up by 'all this well pondered' (598), and the inference to be drawn from all the pondering follows (598-609). In the clause introduced by '[as ye] mark' the 'how' of the sub-clause is resumed by a second 'how' in 569.

557-61.] A sinner, says the preacher, can protect himself against the attacks of other sinners; not so the saint who lacks 'the first apprenticeship to sin'. Is that sound doctrine?

560. *truliest foe*] =foe in the truest sense. Browning treats 'truly' as an adjective; cf. IX. 418, 'truliest victor'.

581-4. *Submit, for best defence, etc.*] Bottini did not in fact 'submit' anything of the kind, but he admitted much (and Browning represents him as admitting still more) against Pompilia. See Introduction to Book IX.

595-7.] Deuteronomy xxxiv. 7.

604. *Man's speech being false, etc.*] See note on X. 349 *seqq.*, and 376-7; cf. 835-40 below.

610-46.] Bottini would not have enclosed this extract from the sermon; however interesting to us, it is irrelevant to his purpose and would have had no interest for his correspondent.

619.] I do not understand 'still' here.

623. *Christ's assurance.*] See X. 1806, note.

631-2.] 'He has lost, perhaps, the means of bringing goodness from its ideal conception into the actual life of man' (Mrs. Orr).

639. *Fame,—that bubble.*] Cf. III. 1353-4.

647. *ampollosity.*] Coined by Browning from Italian *ampollosità*. The word is suitable in connection with 'bubble', for the Latin *ampullari* (derived from *ampulla*, a big-bellied flask) means 'to use *inflated* language'.

648. *the monk's own bubble.*] Cf. 639 above.

657-60.] See note on 325-6; the alleged 'first pleasant consequence' is a pleasantry of Browning's.

662. *of both*], *i.e.* of earth's liars and of the world.

672-80.] All this is a mistake; see note on II. 1198.

674. *convertite*] as an English equivalent for a 'penitent' is found in Shakespeare: *As you like it*, 5. 4. 190, *King John*, 5. 1. 19.

686.] The legal instruments in the *O.Y.B.* show that Tighetti was Pompilia's 'heir-beneficiary' (*hæres beneficiatus*), and make no mention of Gaetano as being her real heir (*O.Y.B.* cclix.-xii., *E.L.* 252-6), but from one of Arcangeli's pleadings (*O.Y.B.* cxiii., *E.L.* 121) it appears that Tighetti was trustee for Gaetano; Arcangeli's Latin, however, is perplexing.

690-92.] See note on 461-2 above, and see 752-67 below.

712.] Hebrews iv. 12.

715. Astræa redux.] Cf. II. 1476.

719-21.] *O.Y.B.* v.-viii., *E.L.* 5-7.

727. *the other sooty scout.*] Genesis viii. 7.

735.] Lamentations iv. 1.

744. *the famous relic*], viz. the *umbilicus* of our Lord (see 184 above).

745-6. *Martial's phrase, etc.*] Martial, *Epp.* 4. 89. 1-2:—

> Ohe, iam satis est, ohe, libelle,
> Iam pervenimus usque ad umbilicos.

The *umbilici* of a book were two knobs at either end of the roller to which the parchment when filled with writing was attached. 'We have come to the *umbilici*' therefore means that the book is finished. Arcangeli plays on the two meanings of the Latin word (see 184).

752. *The Instrument.*] *O.Y.B.* cclix.-xii., *E.L.* 252-6.

755. *September*] should be August, precisely 'six months afterward'; the definitive sentence was given on August 19, the September proceedings were a mere formality.

756.] It does not appear from the records that the Pope caused the delay.

769-70.] On Venturini see note on IV. 1308-16. In the *Instrumentum Sententiæ Definitivæ* he is described as giving sentence *urbis Gubernatoris in Criminalibus Locumtenens sedens.* There is nothing in the records to justify Browning's 'a Venturini *too*!'

774. *By some account.*] It is a mistaken account. There is no doubt that Innocent's accession-day was July 12, 1691, and that he died on September 27, 1700.

775.] See X. 1851 *seqq.*

776-8. *what birth His reign may boast of, etc.*] Voltaire was born in 1694. For Browning on Voltaire see *La Saisiaz, ad fin.* and *The Two Poets of Croisic*, where this 'terrible Pope' displays his fallibility in most humiliating fashion.

785. *Porzia, sister of our Guido.*] See note on IV. 381 *seqq.*

786-7. *The Priors of Arezzo and their head Its Gonfalonier.*] Under the Grand Dukes of Tuscany the Gonfalonier and Priors of Arezzo were probably no more than a Mayor and Corporation. In the later days of the republics the Gonfalonier ('Standard Bearer' of Justice) had become the supreme head of the State, and the Priors, chosen from the Greater Guilds, formed the Signoria.—Browning must have found the 'record' here mentioned at Arezzo on his way to or from Rome on his last visit there in the winter of 1860–61; I assume that the 'I find' of line 782 is to be taken literally. See the second paragraph of Appendix I.

811. *Petrarch*] was born at Arezzo in 1304, his father, who had been keeper of the archives at Florence, having been exiled with Dante in 1302. He left Arezzo in his infancy and seems to have had no further connection with it.

—. *Buonarroti at a pinch.*] At a pinch; for Michael Angelo was not even born at Arezzo, but (in 1475) at Caprese, of which place his Florentine father was Podestà. Caprese, though in the diocese of Arezzo, is many miles away from the city. Michael Angelo's boyhood was passed at Settignano near Florence, and no one has ever called him an Aretine.

The Aretine George Vasari quotes Michael Angelo as saying to him (politely): 'Giorgio, if I have anything good in me, that comes from my birth in the pure air of your country of Arezzo, and perhaps also' from a fact of much greater importance (*Lives of the Painters*, v. p. 229).

812. vexillifer]='flag-bearer' (805).

813. *the Patavinian.*] Livy of Padua (Patavium); ancient critics detected a provincialism in his style, which Quintilian called 'a certain Patavinity'.

I cannot discover that Livy says anywhere that Arezzo was founded by 'Janus of the Double Face' (*Janus bifrons*). He notes a certain double-facedness in the conduct of the Aretines during the Second Punic War (27, 24).

817. *Gaetano, born of love and hate.*] To Pompilia on her death-bed the child seemed 'Only his mother's, born of love not hate' (VII. 1764).

821. *the blazon, shall make bright my page.*] Cf. XI. 2161-6, and see above, pp. xx-xxi.

828. *the Star Wormwood.*] See 12 above, and note.

832-3.] Cf. I. 735-8.

835.] *British Public, who may like me yet.*] See note on I. 410, 'British Public, ye who like me not'.

838. *our human speech is naught.*] See 604 above, and note on X. 349 *seqq.*

849. *troll.*] See note on V. 594.

857. *falsehood would have done the work of truth.*] Would it? From the proposition, 'truth when transmitted becomes falsehood', it does not follow that 'falsehood when transmitted becomes truth'.

862. *twice*] to the eye of the gazer and to his soul.

864-5.] Compare the fine passage in *Fifine at the Fair*, LXI., beginning with

> Ah, Music, wouldst thou help! Words struggle with the weight
> So feebly of the False, thick element between
> Our soul, the True, and Truth!

868. *If this intent save mine*], *i.e.* if by my intent to save the reader's soul I save my own. Summing up the purport of a letter from Browning to his future wife, Professor Dowden wrote (*Browning*, p. 88): 'To sit by her for an hour a day, to write out what is in him for the world, and so to save his soul, would be to attain his ideal in life'.

871. *succeed in guardianship.*] The ring preserves the truth hidden away in 'the rough ore', but it also performs another office of a ring, that of a 'guard-ring' or 'keeper' outside a wedding-ring. Browning would have his 'Ring' lie outside his wife's 'gold ring of verse'.

872. *Lyric Love.*] I. 1391.

873-4.] The allusion is to the inscription, written by the poet Tommaseo, which the municipality of Florence placed on the front of Casa Guidi after Mrs. Browning's death:

QUI SCRISSE E MORI
ELISABETTA BARRET[1] BROWNING
CHE IN CUORE DI DONNA CONCILIAVA
SCIENZA DI DOTTO E SPIRITO DI POETA
E FECE DEL SUO VERSO AUREO ANELLO
FRA ITALIA E INGHILTERRA
PONE QUESTA MEMORIA
FIRENZE GRATA
1861.[2]

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[1] *Sic.*

[2] As printed in Zampini-Salazar, *La Vita e le Opere*, p. 371, the inscription is phrased otherwise in several places. LAPIDE is given for MEMORIA in Mrs. Browning's *Letters*.

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGY OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE POEM

In XII. 227-8, lines written, presumably, very shortly before the publication of the poem in the winter of 1868–9, Browning apostrophizes his Yellow Book with the question,

> How will it be, my four-years'-intimate,
> When thou and I part company anon ?

He says elsewhere [1] that he discovered the book in the month of June ; and many writers, assuming that intimacy, in the sense that the poet intended, followed hard upon first acquaintance, have asserted that the date of the discovery was June 1865 [2] ; they might have said June 1864.

Neither of those dates, however, can be accepted. Browning tells us that having picked up the book on a stall in Florence he took it home with him to Casa Guidi and 'read and read it' there the same evening [3]. Now Mrs. Browning died at Casa Guidi on June 29, 1861, and her husband left Florence a few weeks afterwards ; he was never at Casa Guidi or in Florence again. From this it follows that the find was not made later than the June of 1861 [4], and the poet's friend and biographer, who says that it happened during 'his last days at Casa Guidi' [5], assigned it to that year ; but it is certain that it was made in an earlier June. For (1) Browning says that he took the book with him to Rome with a view to pressing inquiries which it suggests [6], and his last visit to Rome was in the winter of 1860–61 ; (2) he speaks of finding, at Arezzo surely, 'a record in the annals' of that town relating to persons whose existence the book had revealed to him [7], and he was never at Arezzo after the spring of 1861 ; and (3) we have a positive

[1] I. 92, 487.
[2] Symons, *Introduction to Browning*, p. 133 ; Sharp, *Life of Browning*, pp. 116, 119 ; F. M. Wilson, *A Primer on Browning*, p. 10 ; Gardner, *The Story of Florence*, p. 288.
[3] I. 38-119, 469-77.
[4] In Mr. Birrell's two-volume edition of Browning the book is said to have been picked up in June 1862. So also Zampini-Salazar, *La Vita e le Opere*, p. 44.
[5] Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 251.
[6] I. 423-7.
[7] XII. 782-4.

statement from Professor Hall Griffin, on the authority of one of the two persons concerned, that during his last visit to Rome the poet invited a friend to write an account of the book's contents [1]. These facts prove that the book was discovered not later than the June of 1860, and from the third we may infer that it was not discovered earlier [2]; nothing in the poem itself *precludes* an earlier date, but there is neither internal nor external evidence to suggest one. I shall therefore accept as correct the authoritative statement of Sir Frederic Kenyon [3], supported, though not quite positively, by the poet's son [4], that June 1860 was the date of the find.

In a letter written in 1858 Browning told his friend Mr. Fox that 'the stuff out of which books grow lies about one's feet indeed' at Florence [5], and when two years later he found the Yellow Book lying on the Florence bookstall he saw at a glance that the stuff it provided for bookmaking was exceptionally valuable. It riveted his attention on the instant and impressed his very soul, and we might have expected that, knowing that his 'find was gold', he would 'attempt smithcraft' very soon. He did nothing of the kind. The following winter, as we have seen, was spent by the Brownings in Rome, and in the course of it Mrs. Browning had much to tell her correspondents about her husband's interests and occupations. Strange to say—strange, when we remember what a find he thought it—she does not mention his new treasure. She confesses to being more than a little vexed at his having, apparently, forgotten that poetry is his vocation; 'he has taken', she says, 'to modelling under Mr. Story, and is making extraordinary progress'; the work makes his back ache, but 'nothing ever made him so happy before'. She 'grudges a little the time for his particular art' and she expostulates —ineffectually; he talks of material for a volume which he will work at in the summer [6], but at present he will not write at all [7]. Still more surprising are some proposals which Browning made when the Yellow Book was still a recent acquisition. I have just noticed his suggestion that a friend whom he met in Rome that winter should write an account of its contents; he said that he would give him the book for that purpose [8]. He also, at a date not precisely recorded, offered the story as a subject for a novel to another

[1] See below.

[2] It would be unreasonable to interpose a long interval between the discovery and the invitation above mentioned.

[3] It is made in a note on p. 251 of his revised edition of Mrs. Orr's *Life*.

[4] 'The "yellow book" was *probably* picked up in June of 1860' (Letter of Mr. R. Barrett Browning to Professor Hodell, *O.Y.B.* 337, note 536).

[5] Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 215.

[6] *Dramatis Personæ*, probably; see the next paragraph.

[7] Mrs. Orr, *Life*, pp. 230, 232-3.

[8] Hall Griffin, *Life*, p. 229. The Professor says that the friend in question, Mr. W. C. Cartwright, 'is the [oral ?] authority for the incidents with which his name is connected' (p. 231, note 1).

friend, Miss Ogle, the authoress of *A Lost Love*[1]; and Mrs. Orr was 'almost certain' that he offered it 'for poetic use to one of his leading contemporaries'[2]. At the time when these things happened there must have been, as Professor Hall Griffin said, 'a reaction' since that memorable June day; the book had not yet become Browning's 'intimate' in the sense in which he used that word.

We have seen that the poet left Florence, never to return, in the late summer of 1861; he settled down in London in the autumn, and busied himself *inter alia* in preparing his wife's *Last Poems* for the press and (probably) in writing a part of his own *Dramatis Personæ*[3]. Nothing further is heard of the Yellow Book till September 1862, when he writes from Biarritz to Miss Blagden that, besides 'having a great read at Euripides[4]—the only book I brought with me—', he is 'attending to my own matters, my new poem that is about to be, and of which the whole is pretty well in my head,—the Roman murder story you know'[5]. The new poem was still 'about to be'; two years more were to pass before it began to come into being. In 1864 his hands were freed by the publication of *Dramatis Personæ*, and it was in that year, probably, that a stimulus was given to his interest in the murder-story by a second most important find—that of 'the Secondary Source'[6], which adds a mass of interesting detail to the story of the Yellow Book. In a letter dated October 17, 1864 he wrote to Frederic Leighton, then at Rome, begging him to supply him, after careful study, with particulars about the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina; they would, he said, be of great use to him[7]. Now that church is barely mentioned in the Yellow Book, but in the Secondary Source it is the scene of important incidents, the marriage of Guido and Pompilia, the exposure of the bodies of the Comparini. The discovery of the scene of these incidents, of which the poet was to make such brilliant use, must have aroused his curiosity at once, and may have started him upon the actual composition of his poem. Be that as it may—whether the discovery was or was not the cause—, we have conclusive evidence that its composition was in fact begun in the month of the Leighton letter. Immediately after a visit from Browning, in March 1868, Mr. W. M. Rossetti noted in his diary that the poet had told him that he 'began *The Ring and the Book* in October '64'; that 'he was staying at Bayonne' at the time, and there 'laid out

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[1] Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 251; Hall Griffin, *Life, loc. cit.*; *O.Y.B.* 237. Many years later the poet remarked to Professor Corson: 'When she said she made nothing out of it I wrote *The Ring and the Book*'. Hall Griffin says that the offer to Miss Ogle was made, like that to Mr. Cartwright, in the winter of 1860-1, but Mrs. Orr, who seems to have been his authority for the incident, does not date it.—On the Yellow Book as material for a novel see Introduction to Book VI.

[2] Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 251.

[3] These two books were published in 1862 and 1864 respectively.

[4] Euripides figures conspicuously in *The Ring and the Book*; see note on X. 1670-1790.

[5] Mrs. Orr, p. 250.

[6] See above, p. xix.

[7] Mrs. Orr, p. 273; see note on II. 6.

the full plan of the twelve cantos, accurately carried out in the execution'; 'he has written', Rossetti added, 'his forthcoming work all continuously, not some of the later parts before the earlier'[1]. The Secondary Source is used freely in Book I.[2], and the information which Leighton was to supply was wanted for, and is used freely in, Book II.—It was, then, in October 1864[3], rather more than four years after the first find, and (probably) immediately after the second, that Browning began to write his poem, and that the Yellow Book began to be his rather more than four years' intimate; the intimacy grew rapidly and he writes cheerfully ten months later (August 1865): 'Good luck to my great venture, the murder-poem, which I do hope will strike you and all good lovers of mine'[4].

The poem was finished in 1868 and published, in four parts of three books each, in the November of that year and the three following months. Why was it published in that way? 'Poetry', said Bagehot, 'should be memorable, emphatic, intense, and *soon over*'. *The Ring and the Book* has the first three of these qualities, but it certainly has not the last; when Calverley hinted that it might run to 'eighty thousand lines'[5] he multiplied by less than four. Mr. Stopford Brooke supposed that it appeared by instalments because Browning suspected that it might prove wearisome if published all at once, that he was merciful 'to a public which does not care for a work of *longue haleine*'[6]. The poet, however, usually credited his readers with unlimited staying power; it is more likely, perhaps, that the mode of publication was dictated or suggested by his publisher[7].

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[1] *Rossetti Papers*, p. 302. Mr. Rudolf Lehmann (*An Artist's Reminiscences*, p. 224) writes that Browning spoke to him—he does not say at what date—as follows: 'When I first read the book, my plan was at once settled. I went for a walk, gathered twelve pebbles from the road, and put them at equal distances on the parapet that bordered it. These represented the twelve chapters into which the poem is divided and I adhered to that arrangement to the last'. The first of these statements is inconsistent with Rossetti's report, made immediately after it occurred, of his conversation with the poet. Perhaps Mr. Lehmann's memory—his book was not published till 1894—may have played him false on the point.

[2] In lines 350 *seqq.*, 405, 781-4, 873 *seqq.*, 1292, 1307 *seqq.*, 1325.

[3] Mr. Sharp's 'early in 1866' (*Life of Browning*, p. 116) is certainly a mistake.

[4] To Miss Blagden: Mrs. Orr, *Life*, p. 260.

[5] *The Cock and the Bull*.

[6] *Browning*, p. 392.

[7] Since writing as above I find that my guess was not altogether wide of the mark. It is true that Browning was so far merciful to the public as to propose that the poem should appear in *two* monthly volumes; but his publisher, Mr. G. M. Smith, believed that it would 'bear printing'—so he politely phrased it—in four; 'and this accordingly was done'. See Hall Griffin, *Life*, p. 239.

APPENDIX II

THE HOME OR HOMES OF THE COMPARINI: WHERE DID THE MURDERERS ATTACK THEM? WHERE DID POMPILIA DIE?

According to the poem the Comparini had at least two homes in or about Rome: one in the Via Vittoria, 'the aspectable street where they lived mainly', and another, a villa 'of less pretension, meant for jaunts and jollity', in what is described as the 'Pauline district' (II. 202-7).

The Via Vittoria is a well-known street, aspectable and respectable, in the northern part of the city; it runs from the Corso to the Via del Babuino, which it joins near the Piazza di Spagna. It is in this street that Browning puts all the incidents of the home-life of the Comparini before they left Rome for Arezzo, and it was to this street that they returned later on.

The villa in the Pauline district is described by the poet in several places. He says that it 'lurks by the gate at Via Paulina' (II. 1365-1366), that it is 'solitary', 'in a lone garden-quarter' (I. 604-5, III. 1596, IV. 1369), that it is 'smothered up in vines', that it is in the neighbourhood of mill and grange and cottage and shed (IV. 1394), that it is 'out of eye-reach, out of ear-shot', 'at the town's edge by the gate i' the Pauline way' (V. 1335-7). He seems to have placed it close to the Porta S. Paolo and just inside that gate [1], near the famous Pyramid of Cestius. According to the poem it was to this villa, at the extreme south of the city, that Pompilia was taken in October 1697 when she left the Scalette; it was to this villa that Guido and his companions 'felt their way across the town by blind cuts and black turns' (III. 1594-5) from the Abate's villa beyond the northern gate, and it was here that they hacked their victims.

A passage in Book VII. (233-8) suggests that the Comparini had yet another home. Pietro is there represented as contemplating,

[1] That he placed it *inside* the gate appears from VII. 233-8, where Pietro is represented as preferring 'the other villa' (see below) because it is 'outside the city gate'.

after Pompilia's confinement, a move to 'the other villa, we know where, still farther off'; such a move, he thought, would be good for the infant Gaetano, who would 'grow fast in the good air', and it would have another advantage—'wood is cheap and wine sincere outside the city gate' (see note on VII. 238).

Let us, however, ignore this second villa and possibly third home; even a second home is something of a puzzle. We are told of the villa in Via Paulina that Pietro had 'bought it betimes', and that he was in occupation both of it and of the house in Via Vittoria before the family went, in 1693, with Guido to Arezzo (II. 201-7, 475-6). Can this have been so? Though his will, made in 1695 (*O.Y.B.* clxxxvi., *E.L.* 191), shows that in that year he still had property to bequeath (*O.Y.B.* clvi.-vii., *E.L.* 161), he had, according to one of our authorities, been reduced to such straits in 1693 that he was then a *povero vergognoso* receiving a monthly pittance from the Apostolic Palace (*O.Y.B.* cxli., *E.L.* 145)[1]. In 1697, after some of his property had fallen into Guido's hands, he found himself engaged in three protracted lawsuits, and it is difficult to see how this 'easy careless man', who followed no profession or trade, can have kept up a villa as well as a town-house. The shrewd and masterful Violante would surely have insisted on his selling or letting one or the other.

The records say very little about the Comparini's home or homes. The only evidence to be found there for the house in Via Vittoria is the address of a letter written, or alleged to have been written, by Pompilia on May 3 [1697], from the prison at Castelnuovo; *Al Sig. Pietro Comparini mio Padre alla strada Vittoria. Roma* (*O.Y.B.* clvi., *E.L.* 160). The only evidence for a house in 'the Pauline district' is the *Obligatio* of Pompilia, when released from the Scalette in the following October, to keep to Pietro's house as a prison; his house is there stated to be *sita in via Paulina* (*O.Y.B.* clv., *E.L.* 159).

Now there was at least one Via (or Strada) Paolina in the heart of Rome, and Browning might have identified the Via Paulina of the *Obligatio* with it. His reason for placing it in a solitary suburban quarter was probably because a lonely villa commended itself to him as a more suitable scene for the murders[2]. The records nowhere suggest that they were committed in such a villa; the smothering vines, the neighbouring mills and granges and sheds were the poet's 'fancy added to the fact', or rather, as we shall see, substituted for it.

The truth about the Via Paulina home has been discovered, with a close approach to certainty, by Sir Frederick Treves. Maps and

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[1] See, however, the note on IV. 111.

[2] See the expostulation which Pompilia dreams that her son might in times to come address to her (VII. 216-18):

> Poor imprudent child!
> Why did you venture out of the safe street?
> Why go so far from help to that lone house?

plans of the period show that the Via del Babuino, into which, as we have seen, the Via Vittoria runs from the Corso, was then officially styled Strada Paolina. Assuming that the Via del Babuino is the Via Paulina of Pompilia's bond [1], Sir Frederick concludes that the Via Paulina house and the Via Vittoria house were one and the same, a house at the corner where the two streets meet and therefore describable as in either of them [2]. Given their identity the only possible alternatives to this conclusion are, either that the Comparini occupied at the same time two houses in adjacent streets, or that between May and October 1697 they migrated from a house in one of these streets to a house in the other. The first of these alternatives is absurd, and the second (like the first) finds no support in the Old Yellow Book.

The validity of the Treves theory is confirmed when we examine the evidence for the scene of the murders. The exposure of the bodies of the Comparini in the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina (*O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265) makes it probable that they were murdered in or near that parish. Now entries in the church's Register of Deaths record, under date January 3, 1698, that the victims 'died of certain wounds in the house where they lived in the Strada Paolina', and the only Strada Paolina in the neighbourhood of the church was the Via del Babuino.

Of the scene of Pompilia's death Browning gives two different accounts. According to his 'Other Half-Rome' she died 'in the long white lazar-house . . . Saint Anna's' (III. 35-7); according to his Pope (X. 1504-6) and his Bottini (XII. 676), in the Monastery (of St. Mary Magdalene) of the Convertites. The 'lazar-house' was suggested to the poet by the fact that Fra Celestino Angelo, to whom Pompilia made confession on her death-bed, described himself as 'of S. Anna' [3]; the Monastery of the Convertites by his belief that the claim of that institution to Pompilia's property was based on the ground that she was a loose woman who had died within its walls (XII. 678-80).

The first identification was the merest guess, and if Sir Frederick Treves is right in saying that 'no such house [as a hospital of Saint Anna] had any existence' (Treves, p. 76) it was not a happy one. As to the Convertites, Browning seems to have been mistaken about their claim. It was based apparently on a general right of the Monastery to inherit the property of loose women who died within *the city*; our records do not suggest that this right was limited as the poet represents (*O.Y.B.* cxxx., cclix. *seqq.*, *E.L.* 137, 252 *seqq.*).—The

[1] There is a Via Paolina to-day near S. Maria Maggiore; I do not know whether it existed in 1698.

[2] See Treves, pp. 101-3, and Illustration 106.

[3] *O.Y.B.* lviii., *E.L.* 58-9. Fra Celestino is also described (*O.Y.B.* lix.) as of *Gies* and Maria*. The mother-house of the *Agostiniani Scalzi* (bare-footed Augustinians) to which community Celestino belonged is at the church of that name in the Corso, near the Via Vittoria.

real scene of Pompilia's death is fixed by the San Lorenzo Register: *morì nella casa dove abitava alla strada paolina* (*O.Y.B.* 322; Treves, p. 300).—In VII. 27 Browning represents her as expressing a hope that she would be buried at 'the proper church', her own San Lorenzo; the Register shows that if she had such a hope it was fulfilled: *fu sept^a* [*seppellita* or *sepolta*] *in q^a n^a* [*questa nostra*] *Chiesa.*

APPENDIX III

WHEN WERE THE COMPARINI AT AREZZO?

It is stated repeatedly in the poem that the Comparini, Pietro and Violante, were at Arezzo for four months (II. 504, III. 522, V. 617, XI. 1195)[1]; these statements are based on the deposition of Pompilia (*O.Y.B.* lxxxiii., *E.L.* 91), and are consistent with the 'a few months' of the Second Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cexi., *E.L.* 213) and of Bottini (*O.Y.B.* lxix., *E.L.* 76). As we read the story we find that, if we are to follow it intelligently, we must answer the question, When did the four months begin and end?

There is evidence that they ended early in April 1694. Two letters written to Pietro by residents in Arezzo[2] imply that he and Violante left the town very shortly before the Palm Sunday of that year (*O.Y.B.* liv., *E.L.* 54-5). Palm Sunday in 1694 was April 11, so that, if what the letters imply was the fact, the four months must have begun early in December 1693.

This conclusion, however, cannot be reconciled with other statements in the records. The Secondary Source, it is true, says that, the marriage having taken place 'during December', the Comparini went off to Arezzo with the newly married pair 'in the same December' (*O.Y.B.* 209, *E.L.* 259-60), but Pompilia deposed that it was not till two months after the marriage that she and the others left Rome (*O.Y.B.* lxxxii.: *doppo essere stata sposata*[3] *al medemo* [*i.e.* to Guido], *si trattenne in Roma per lo spatio di due mesi senza consumare il matrimonio, e passato d. tempo, fui condotta assieme colli sodetti* [*i.e.* the Comparini] *dal sodetto mio marito in Arezzo*). If Pompilia was married in December and stayed at Rome for two months afterwards, we must conclude that the party went to Arezzo in February 1694, and that the Comparini did not return to Rome till the following June.

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[1] In one place (IV. 568) it is suggested that their stay was very slightly longer.

[2] The letters are undated, but they were clearly written soon after Pietro's departure.

[3] Professor Hodell translates *sposata* by 'engaged', which is of course a mistake (see *E.L.* 91); note the words in the *O.Y.B.* which precede those quoted.

Which (if either) of these conflicting conclusions are we to accept? As they both follow from statements in the records it is obvious that one (or more) of those statements must be inaccurate. Fortunately it is possible to say where the inaccuracy lies.

When Sir Frederick Treves was collecting materials for his most valuable work on *The Country of 'The Ring and the Book'*, he examined the marriage-register of the church of San Lorenzo. He found there evidence of much importance to the story in more than one way [1], and he found *inter alia* that Pompilia was married, not, as the Secondary Source says, in December 1693, but three months earlier, on September 6 [2]. With the discovery of this fact all difficulty disappears, the chronology becomes clear [3]:

September 6, 1693. The Marriage.
Early in December, 1693. The Departure to Arezzo.
Early in April, 1694. The Return of the Comparini to Rome.

Browning took as his starting-point the mistaken statement about the date of the marriage which he found in the Secondary Source, but he aggravated the chronological difficulty which that statement involves by putting it *late* in December (on 'December's deadest day' [4], VII. 426). He took account of Pompilia's assertion that there was an interval between the marriage and the move; he makes three weeks pass after the former event before Pietro is even informed of it (VII. 479). He can hardly, therefore, have dated the move much earlier—having married Pompilia on December 21 he should, in view of what she says about the *spatio di due mesi*, have dated it some weeks later—than the end of January. But the records told him that he must give the Comparini a full four months in Arezzo, and he must have known that he had to get them back to Rome early in April. Placed in this quandary he prudently allowed his time-indications to become extremely vague.

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[1] See note on II. 70.

[2] The Secondary Source was probably written, as its concluding sentence suggests, some years after the events which it narrates; Mrs. Orr's statement (*Handbook*, p. 83) that it was 'published immediately after the Count's execution' has no warrant.

[3] I assume that Pompilia's *due mesi* should have been *tre*.

[4] Professor Hall Griffin (*Life*, p. 312) says that Browning put the marriage in December 'for artistic reasons'—"one dim end of a December day" (III. 449)—on account of the gloom associated with it'. He should have said '*late* in December'; in putting it in December Browning simply followed his Secondary Source.

APPENDIX IV

COULD POMPILIA WRITE?

The poet always maintained that, while breathing his own breath into the lifeless facts which he found in the Yellow Book, he accepted them as facts; he declared for instance that his Pompilia was both in speech and act the Pompilia of the Book [1]. Now that the Book is in our hands the statement challenges examination; we can hardly help asking, Is the Pompilia here depicted as noble and as spotless as the poet's heroine? and more particularly, Is she so transparently truthful?

In this Appendix I propose to test her veracity in a matter of great importance to the story. She declared on oath in May 1697 that she could not write. If we can find good reason for believing that declaration, she is cleared at once from the damaging charges based on the letters sent to the Abate Paolo in the summer of 1694 and on the love-letters composed in the spring of 1697 [2]; but, if we are driven to disbelieve it, it becomes, not certain indeed nor even in my judgment at all probable [3], but at any rate not impossible that she

[1] See Appendix V.

[2] The Paolo-letters are printed in *O.Y.B.* lv., lxxxvi., *E.L.* 56-7, 95, the love-letters in *O.Y.B.* xcii.-xcix., *E.L.* 99-106. The comments made upon them by the lawyers and the pamphleteers are repeated and expanded in the poem; for the Paolo-letters see II. 684-725, III. 738-71, 1315-16, IV. 767-86, V. 834-67, VIII. 157-98, IX. 807-38; for the love-letters see II. 1068-76, 1126-47, IV. 1032-59, V. 1133-62, VI. 510-19, 557-74, 1650-73, VII. 175-79, IX. 538-47, X. 647-56. Some of these passages might have been excised or abridged with advantage.

[3] The two Paolo-letters were probably faked: their contents are such that Pompilia can hardly have written them. They are inconsistent with her actions; her explanation of the mode of their production (by Guido) is quite credible; the more important letter was put in, during the murder-trial, *by the prosecution*, obviously as damaging, not to Pompilia, but to Guido: Guido had an obvious motive for composing them in Pompilia's name, for rumours of his ill-treatment of her had aroused in Paolo's mind a disquiet which he would desire to remove (see *O.Y.B.* ccxlviii., *E.L.* 245); and, finally, we are told by Bottini, and his assertion is nowhere contradicted, that at least one of them had been 'spurned by the judges' (*spreta a DD. Iudicibus*) in the previous trial (*O.Y.B.* clxxii., *E.L.* 179).—The authenticity of the love-letters is also very doubtful. Those which were attributed to Pompilia—the majority—prove that the writer was, what *she* can hardly have been, well versed in classical literature; all knowledge of them

wrote those letters, and (what is more important) all her evidence, except when corroborated, becomes suspect. What answer, then, to our question, Could Pompilia write? does the Yellow Book suggest?

I. Pompilia's statements on the subject are as follows:—

(*a*) In her first examination in the Process of Flight, on May 13, 1697, she deposed: 'About a month ago (*un mese fà in circa*[1]) I went for confession [at Arezzo] to an Augustinian Father whom they called the Roman, and told him of all my sorrows, praying him to write to my father in my name because I cannot write (*non sò scriuere*), and to represent to him that I was in despair . . . ' (*O.Y.B.* lvi., lxxxiv., *E.L.* 92).

(*b*) In further examination, on May[2] 21, 1697: 'While I was at Arezzo I wrote at my husband's instance [in June 1694] to the Abate Franceschini, my brother-in-law here at Rome: and because I could not write (*non sapeuo scriuere*) my husband wrote the letter with a pencil and made me trace it over with a pen. . . . This happened two or three times' (*O.Y.B.* liv., lxxxvi., *E.L.* 55, 94).

(*c*) In the same further examination: 'The said Caponsacchi before the affair in question (*prima del fatto*, *i.e.*, apparently, before the flight) did not send me any letter, because I cannot read manuscript and cannot write. Nor did I ever before the said affair send a letter of any kind to the said Caponsacchi' (*O.Y.B.* lxxxv.-vi., *E.L.* 94).

(*d*) In a letter dated May 3, [1697], purporting to have been written from the prison at Castelnuovo to the Comparini at Rome, and produced in the course of the murder-trial: '. . . I sent you news of these things on purpose, but you did not believe that those letters which I sent you were written by me. But I tell you that I finished learning to write at Arezzo. . . . The bearer of this letter was moved by compassion and gave me the paper and what else was necessary. So come here to Castelnuovo as soon as you have read this letter of mine' (*O.Y.B.* clvi., *E.L.* 160).

II. Caponsacchi, who denied on oath that he either received or wrote any *love*-letters, admitted that he received letters, which he supposed to have been written by Pompilia, about the proposed

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was denied by Caponsacchi, who declared that the handwriting of one assigned to him bore no resemblance to his own; and Guido's account of their discovery does not, to say the least, carry conviction.—It would therefore be impossible to argue that the existence of either of these sets of letters proves that Pompilia could write.

[1] Professor Hodell translates the words by 'about a month later' (later, he seems to understand, than 'the *beginning* of these troubles'). They surely mean 'about a month ago', and fix Pompilia's assertion *non sò scriuere* to the time of the approaching *end* of these troubles, *i.e.* to April 1697.—The Professor makes a serious slip when he translates (*E.L.* 92) the marginal comment *peirat* ('she perjures herself') *asserens nescire scribere* by 'she *died* asserting that she did not know how to write'; perhaps he mis-read *peierat* as *perierat*. There is, by the way, no evidence that Pompilia said anything on her death-bed about her ability or inability to write.

[2] The *Martii* of the document is clearly a slip for *Maii*.

flight. The first of these, he said, was brought him by the servant Maria, the others were thrown down by Pompilia from her window; his earlier answers were given to the servant, those to Pompilia's last two appeals were respectively (1) drawn up by Pompilia to her window by a string, and (2) given by word of mouth as he was walking in the street and she was standing at that window (*O.Y.B.* lxxxviii.-ix., *E.L.* 96).

III. Guido's advocates do not (I think) mention the Castelnuovo letter (I. (*d*) above) but they maintain the authenticity of the other letters attributed to Pompilia and stigmatize her *non sò scriuere* as a lie and a perjury (see *e.g. O.Y.B.* lxxxiv., lxxxvi., *E.L.* 92, 94). To justify this harsh judgment Arcangeli cites the fact (if it is a fact) that she recognized her signature at the command of the Court (*O.Y.B.* civ., *E.L.* 112); it was, he says, appended to her marriage-agreement, 'about the truth of which it is monstrous to dispute, because, for one reason, the signature of one of the cardinals is also thereto appended'. This latter point is also made in the pro-Guido First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxlvi., *E.L.* 150).

IV. The anti-Guido lawyers, who, we should remember, were not necessarily advocates for Pompilia, do not seriously argue that she could not write. (*a*) When he deals with the Arezzo love- and flight-letters, Bottini's case is, firstly, that they have not been proved to be in her handwriting; secondly, that she repudiated them; thirdly, that even if she wrote them they are consistent with her innocence (*O.Y.B.* lxxiii., clxxv., *E.L.* 80, 182). (*b*) With respect to the principal letter to Paolo, he argues that its tenor shows it to be a forgery, or alternatively that Pompilia wrote it under compulsion (*O.Y.B.* lxxi., clxxii.-iii., *E.L.* 77, 179-80). (*c*) He does not dispute the genuineness of the Castelnuovo letter; indeed he uses it in support of the opinion that she may have written the flight-letters (*O.Y.B.* clxxiii.-iv., *E.L.* 180).

V. Lamparelli, who, unlike Bottini, was solely concerned to restore Pompilia's 'good name and fame', (*a*) argues as he does about the love- and flight-letters (*O.Y.B.* ccl., *E.L.* 247). (*b*) He notes that she asserted that she could not write at the time when the principal Paolo-letter was written; but his denial of its authenticity is based, like Bottini's, on other grounds (*O.Y.B.* ccxlvii., *E.L.* 244). (*c*) To the Castelnuovo letter he does not allude.

Such is the evidence of the Yellow Book; what conclusion must we draw from it?

In attempting an answer I need not linger over II. and III. Caponsacchi's statements (II.) are not always reconcilable with Pompilia's under I. (*c*), but for our present purpose they are of secondary importance [1]. The suggestion that Pompilia could not

[1] I speak of the discrepancies and of their significance in Appendix V.

write surprised him, but he had, he said, no certain knowledge on that matter (*O.Y.B.* xc., *E.L.* 97). The statements of Guido's advocates (III.) concern us even less. They were bound to maintain that the Arezzo letters were genuine, and the only proof they offer of their authenticity is that Pompilia could sign her name, but you cannot necessarily write letters because you can do that.

The evidence of IV. and V. is of more significance; it is strange that Bottini, and still more strange that Lamparelli, did not firmly maintain that Pompilia was illiterate; they would hardly, perhaps, have withdrawn from so important a position if it had really been tenable against attack. It is, however, on Pompilia's own evidence (I.) that we must chiefly depend for an answer to our question. Of this I. we must lay no stress on what is stated under (*b*); the fact (if fact it is) that she could not write in 1694 does not establish her alleged inability in 1697. Confining our attention, therefore, to (*a*) (*c*) and (*d*) we note that on May 13 and May 21, 1697, Pompilia, when under examination upon her oath, gave 'I cannot write' as her reason for having enlisted an amanuensis to write a letter for her in the previous month, and as a proof of the impossibility of her having corresponded with Caponsacchi. Yet a few months later, in January or February 1698 (after Pompilia's death), a letter signed with her name was produced in Court, and the date it bears—May 3, [1697]—was several days earlier than the dates of her reiterated asseverations of illiteracy. The letter, which is of some length and not that of a *tiro*, states that the writer had previously written in her own hand to the same correspondent; it explains that she had finished learning to write before she left Arezzo [1]. If this letter of May 3 was really written by Pompilia, we are forced to the conclusion that she gave false evidence; we must agree with the marginal commentator, *peierat asserens nescire scribere.*

Is its genuineness doubtful? When it was put in the Court was told that it had been found, after Pompilia's death, *inter domesticas scripturas* [2], *i.e.*, I suppose, among papers found in the Comparini's house. Guido's craft and wickedness may have known no bounds, but it is difficult to believe that he forged it. He cannot have done so before Pompilia's imprisonment at Castelnuovo, for the letter assumes that circumstance and it could not have been foreseen; and he can hardly have had an opportunity afterwards of inserting anything among the *domesticae scripturae.* Nor would he in any case have forged such a letter as this, for its contents show that the question *cui profuerit?* [3] ('who stood to gain by it?') could not have been answered by *Guidoni*: it gives a plausible and an innocent explanation of the flight. The letter was put in by the Fisc, *i.e.* by the anti-Guido lawyers, and its authenticity was disputed by no one,

[1] Pompilia left Arezzo on the night of April 29-30, 1697.
[2] *O.Y.B.* clxxvi., *E.L.* 180.
[3] See note on IV. 1054.

not even by Lamparelli, the champion of Pompilia's good name. It may be objected that Pompilia herself had no opportunity of repudiating it, for (as I have said) it was not produced till after her death; but this fact hardly detracts from the cogency of the proof that it was hers.

The letter of May 3 is not, I think, adroitly handled in the poem. It was Browning's concern, even more than Lamparelli's, to 'saint Pompilia'[1]; he should either have ignored the letter or explained it away. The former alternative would have been inconsistent with his practice, for he rarely ignored what he found in his Yellow Book; and he does not adopt it. It is true that his Pompilia, who (unlike the real Pompilia) professes illiteracy on her death-bed[2], makes no mention of this letter; but Browning brings it to our notice in Book IX.[3]. Having done so he should surely have offered some suggestion which would have enabled his readers, the letter notwithstanding, to share his belief in his heroine's absolute veracity; but he offers none. No doubt in Book IX. his mind is fully occupied, not by the task of clearing Pompilia, but by that of caricaturing Bottini. The real Bottini, in a somewhat hazy paragraph[4], admitted the genuineness of the letter without question, and was therefore inclined to admit also the genuineness of the later Arezzo letters; he suggested that Pompilia learnt to write during her last days there, 'despair sharpening her wits' (*desperatione ingenium acuente*). Fixing on this last phrase Browning proceeded to provide his readers with some delightful entertainment; he made the advocate illustrate Pompilia's sudden acquirement, under the pressure of necessity, of an unfamiliar art by the lines in which Persius speaks of parrots and magpies learning to speak, and poetasters to poetize, under the stimulus of hunger[5]. He represented him as going on, *more suo*, to deny *pro forma* the authenticity of the Castelnuovo letter, which, he explains, was forged by Guido; but the denial and the explanation are hardly intended to be convincing, and they do not convince.[6] The poet should have come to Pompilia's rescue; he should have made a serious attempt, elsewhere if not in Book IX., to clear his heroine from the stain which the letter, introduced but unexplained, casts upon her veracity, just as he attempts, most ingeniously, to show that her incorrect statement about the time of her arrival at the Castelnuovo inn was no falsehood, but an innocent and natural mistake[7].

[1] XII. 710.
[2] See VII. 82, 1287, 1490; cf. VII. 691, 1124, VI. 726.
[3] IX. 459-63.
[4] *O.Y.B.* clxxiii.-iv., *E.L.* 180.
[5] IX. 448-68.
[6] See the last paragraph.
[7] See note on VII. 1580-84. For a reason given at the end of Appendix V. I do not think that his attempt is successful..

APPENDIX V

THE MONOLOGUES AND THE DEPOSITIONS[1] OF CAPONSACCHI AND POMPILIA

In the monologues of Books VI. and VII. Caponsacchi and Pompilia when dealing with the same group of facts often lay stress on different incidents; indeed one of them may sometimes entirely ignore an incident of which the other gives a full description. Which is as it should be; such differences are natural in themselves, are often characteristic of the speakers, add variety to the poem. Meanwhile the two monologues, so far as they cover the same ground, tell us a substantially identical tale; they are not only self-consistent separately, they are consistent with one another.

When, however, we compare them with the two depositions on which they profess to be based, or the two depositions with one another, we find no such consistency. I propose in this Appendix to notice (I.) discrepancies between the depositions; (II.) discrepancies between Caponsacchi's, and (III.) between Pompilia's, deposition and monologue; and to offer (IV.) some observations on the significance of all these discrepancies.

I. *Discrepancies between the depositions.* (*a*) According to Pompilia she had at least three conversations with Caponsacchi about the proposed flight before the last day which they spent at Arezzo; according to Caponsacchi there were no conversations between them on any subject whatever before that day. (*b*) Caponsacchi speaks of Pompilia standing at her window, throwing down letters to him and drawing up letters from him; Pompilia denies that any such letters passed; none, she says, were written, because she could not read manuscript and could not write. (*c*) According to Caponsacchi the final arrangements for the flight were made by conversation, according to Pompilia by a signal. (*d*) Pompilia says that on April 29 she came downstairs at dawn, met Caponsacchi, and went with him on foot from the house to the San Spirito gate, where a

[1] For these depositions see *O.Y.B.* lvi.-lvii., lxxxii.-vi., lxxxviii.-xci.; *E.L.* 57, 90-98.

carriage awaited them; Caponsacchi says that Pompilia came alone at 1 A.M. to the San Clemente gate, where he was waiting with the carriage. (*e*) Pompilia affirms and re-affirms that she and her companion reached the Castelnuovo inn at dawn; Caponsacchi deposes that they arrived there 'in the evening'. (*f*) About the time spent at the inn the two depositions contradict one another flatly. Says Caponsacchi: 'Because the said Francesca [= Pompilia] said that she felt some pains and had not the spirit to continue the journey without rest, she threw herself, dressed as she was, on the bed in a *camera*, and I, in my clothes likewise, lay down on another bed which there was in the same *camera*, telling the innkeeper to call us after three or four hours. . . . But he did not call us, and the said Francesca's husband arrived on the scene in the mean-time'. Says Pompilia: 'We stopped [1] at the inn for the space of more than an hour, and during this time we stayed in a *sala* upstairs. . . . I did not go to sleep nor lie down to rest . . . during the time I stopped there'. And when it is suggested to her that Caponsacchi's story is the true one she sticks to her own.

II. *Discrepancies between Caponsacchi's monologue and his deposition.* (*a*) The deposition denies, the monologue asserts [2], that love-letters, purporting to come from Pompilia, were brought to Caponsacchi by the servant Maria. (*b*) The deposition speaks of a long series of letters relating to the flight; according to the monologue there were no such letters [3]. (*c*) The deposition denies by implication the statement of the monologue [4] that Caponsacchi was for a time inclined to go back from his promise that he would take Pompilia to Rome. (*d*) According to the monologue [5] Caponsacchi 'paced the passage, kept watch all night long', at Castelnuovo, and was in the courtyard of the inn when Guido arrived; according to the deposition, as we have seen (I. (*f*)) he slept (and over-slept) in the *camera* in which Pompilia slept also, and Guido arrived while he was still there.

III. *Discrepancies between Pompilia's monologue and her deposition.* (*a*) In her monologue [6] Pompilia says most emphatically that 'the first words I heard ever from his [Caponsacchi's] lips' were a promise to deliver her, made two days before the flight. In her deposition she speaks of a much earlier conversation with him; it occurred soon after the theatre-incident and resulted in his promising not to excite Guido's suspicions further by passing along the street into which her window looked. (*b*) In her monologue [7] she says that love-letters, purporting to come from Caponsacchi, were

[1] *Noi ci fermassimo* does not mean 'we shut ourselves in' as Hodell translates.
[2] VI. 506 *seqq.* Browning's ingenious treatment of the earlier history of the love-letters is based on nothing in the Yellow Book.
[3] The flight was proposed, agreed to, and arranged, according to the monologue, at two interviews (VI. 701-895, 1063-86).
[4] VI. 974-1062. [5] VI. 1418.
[6] VII. 1444. [7] VII. 1118-25, 1149-57.

brought and read to her by Maria; in her deposition, as we have seen (I. (*b*)), she says that no such letters came. (*c*) In her deposition (I. (*f*)) she gives a detailed account of what happened between her arrival at dawn and her husband's arrival soon after at Castelnuovo; in her monologue [1] she declares that her mind is a blank about everything between the 'tragical red eve' of her arrival and her husband's sudden appearance; 'the head swam round', she says; 'the bewildered flesh sucked down all sense'.

IV. *The significance of these discrepancies.* The results of source-study are not always commensurate with the labour which it involves, but an examination of the sources of *The Ring and the Book* yields a rich return. The discrepancies which it reveals raise an intriguing problem by the way. In conversation [2] and in the poem Browning declared emphatically that though his fancy might play upon the facts of the Yellow Book he accepted them as he found them; it is a question of great interest how in the face of such discrepancies as have been noted under II. and III. he could so greatly exaggerate his fidelity to his source. Their real significance, however, lies elsewhere. It might be supposed that the revelation of inconsistencies, either between the depositions of Caponsacchi and Pompilia or between Browning and those depositions, could not increase our enjoyment of the poem; for forty years [3], it might be argued, Books VI. and VII. stirred the minds and thrilled the hearts of readers who were not aware of the inconsistencies, and they will affect readers who *are* aware of them in precisely the same way. They will, I believe, affect them differently and more powerfully; an examination of the conflicting depositions can hardly fail, when they compare them with these two Books, to add immensely to their admiration of Browning's genius. It will show them that he picked and chose and altered with consummate skill; that for everything that is brilliant or sublime in the monologues the records gave him but the barest hints; that the charm and the nobility of the finely contrasted characters of the hero and the heroine were entirely his creation [4].

It remains to enquire how far the depositions, together with other parts of the Yellow Book, support certain general conclusions at

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[1] VII. 1571-86. On the statement of Pompilia about the time of her arrival at Castelnuovo, and on Browning's explanation of that statement, see the note on VII. 1580-84 and the end of this Appendix.

[2] 'I asked him if it did not make him very happy to have created such a woman as Pompilia; and he said, "I assure you I found her in the book just as she speaks and acts in my poem"' (the Rev. John W. Chadwick in *The Christian Register*, January 19, 1888; quoted in *O.Y.B.* 282). See also Dr. Pope's edition of *A Death in the Desert*, p. 54.

[3] Books VI. and VII. were published in December 1868 and January 1869 respectively. Professor Hodell's reproduction of the Yellow Book was first published in 1908.

[4] 'One can hardly come from a close study of Book and Ring, side by side, without an ever-deepening sense of the might of Browning as a creative artist' (Hodell, *O.Y.B.* 291).

which the poet arrived. He told W. M. Rossetti that the Book supplied a ' mass of almost equally balanced evidence ' [1], but his reflections upon that evidence led him to an assured conviction that the charge of misconduct brought against Caponsacchi and Pompilia was a false charge, based on evidence which was for the most part a deliberately false concoction. In spite of the contradictions which I have noticed most readers of the Book will share that conviction. They will not, I think, discover a ' true St. George ' and an absolutely blameless heroine in the Caponsacchi and Pompilia who appear there. It is true that the Caponsacchi of the Book makes a favourable impression. He is humane, manly, resolute, adventurous; he speaks the truth, so far as we can judge, without reserve, and does not calculate the consequences too nicely. We do not, however, detect in him any spiritual exaltation and enthusiasm or any real qualifications for a hero of romance; for such a rôle he seems all too matter-of-fact. Since the occasion serves—he is going to Rome in any case—he will escort Pompilia, as he would escort another, to save her from oppression or from death; it is a plain duty, and there the matter ends. The tender age, the helpless inexperience, the undeserved misfortunes, the saintly end of the real Pompilia excite our sympathy and our pity so keenly that, even if we could wholly dissociate her from the Pompilia of the poem, we should still desire to find her faultless; we recognize that her faults were but the natural result of the three-years' torture at Arezzo. Long-suffering and yet not too submissive during all that terrible time, brave and intrepid at its close, she was crushed by the wretched miscarriage of the flight; a weakness and timidity which the poet veils betrayed her into subterfuge and falsehood. We saw in Appendix IV. that the gravest suspicion attaches to her professions of illiteracy, for which fear supplied an obvious motive; more than a suspicion of inveracity is aroused by several other parts of her deposition [2]. It is possible that on one or two points on which her evidence is contradicted by Caponsacchi's she spoke the truth, or at least that she meant to speak it; but we must remember that only a fortnight passed between the flight and her examination by the Court; that, though the painful excitements, and perhaps the physical suffering, through which she had passed might well have blurred her recollections, her statements on critical points were positive and definite; that when she and Caponsacchi differed as to facts his version is often supported by other evidence, but that hers is not; that if her statements were false there was a motive for the falsehoods.—Let us glance for a moment at one of the most glaring discrepancies between the depositions, that concerning the time of the arrival at the Castelnuovo inn. Chronological and geographical considerations suggest, what other witnesses proved, that Pompilia's assertion on

[1] *Rossetti Papers*, p. 401.

[2] See above, I., especially (*e*) and (*f*).

the point was incorrect. Browning admits the incorrectness and invents an explanation by which he thinks that he acquits her of mendacity: but his explanation does not cover enough ground. For Pompilia did not only assert (and re-assert) that she reached the inn at the reddening of sunrise, which reddening, in her fainting state, she mistook, says the poet, for the reddening of sunset; she gave a clear account, quite inconsistent with the alleged unconsciousness, and equally inconsistent with Caponsacchi's story, of the precise manner in which the time at the inn was spent [1].

[1] See above, I. (*e*), (*f*); and the note on VII. 1580-84.

APPENDIX VI

THE INFLICTION OF TORTURE

The Ring and the Book contains (I.) allusions to a very severe kind of torture employed by the ecclesiastical courts at Rome to force confessions of guilt, and (II.) allusions to the infliction of this or a milder torture upon Guido and his confederates in the murder-trial; as well as (III.) some general remarks on the use of torture as a judicial process.

I. The very severe kind of torture was, says Browning,

> called the Cord,
> Or Vigil-torture more facetiously [1].

Its *effects* are described by the poet's Arcangeli in a translation of a passage from the 'immortal "Questions"' of the jurist Farinacci [2]; Browning took the trouble, as Professor Hodell has shown [3], to hunt up a reference made to the *Quaestiones* by the Advocate of the Poor in *O. Y. B.* xxxv., and he put a part of what he found into Arcangeli's mouth. The great jurist also describes the *nature* of the Vigil, which name, in view of what the torture in fact was, may well be called 'facetious', but this latter description, which *inter alia* explains the terms 'Vigil' and 'Cord', is not reproduced in the poem; a curious reader will find it in the Professor's translation from the *Quaestiones* [4].

II. In IV. 1621-4 Browning's 'man of quality' says that he 'hears the court intends' to put Guido to the torture, a step which he regards as 'unduly harsh', for 'he is noble, and he may be innocent'. The speaker is represented as discoursing on the evening of January 5, the third day after the murders; on the same or the following day Guido is made to say that he has already been 'put

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[1] I. 979-80.

[2] VIII. 330-44; see note on VIII. 148.

[3] *O.Y.B.* 335 (note 526).—Professor Hodell says that Browning 'learned almost all his law from the Book'; the instance of further research above noticed is, he adds, the only instance he has found 'of the Poet's having traveled beyond the Book for legal information' (*O Y.B.* 258-9). See however my note on X. 2004.

[4] *O.Y.B.* 335.

to the rack' in spite of his nobility [1], and it appears from I. 977-80 as well as from V. 38 that this means that he has suffered, not mere ordinary torture, but the Vigil. Again, in the monologue of the poet's Arcangeli, which, says Browning, was 'the first speech for Guido' [2] and was the first of all the pleadings, the advocate plainly implies that both Guido and his confederates have undergone the severer ordeal [3].

The Yellow Book, however, proves that all this is incorrect. It shows quite clearly, as Professor Hodell notes [4], that there were two stages in the trial. During the first stage, when the earlier arguments were written, though some 'simple' torture may have been inflicted upon Guido's plebeian associates [5], the Vigil was not inflicted either upon them or upon their principal; the prosecution applies to the Court to decree its employment, the defence maintains that the application should be refused. The parties seem to agree that, though the Court has a discretionary power in the matter [6], the Vigil can only in strictness be decreed (1) if the crime with which an accused person is charged is 'most atrocious', and (2) if there is a *semiplena probatio, i.e.* if the proofs of his guilt are strong; in the absence of these conditions, he is, it seems, liable to 'simple' torture only [7]. A 'most atrocious' crime is defined as one for which the penalty is death [8], or, as Spreti insists, not 'mere death' (*mors simplex*, which means, I suppose, hanging or beheading) but something more awful, such as dismembering, burning, and the like [9]. Whether the crime of Guido and his associates was 'most atrocious' in the sense that it deserved capital punishment, simple or not simple, was of course the point at issue in the trial.—When we reach the second stage, to which the later arguments belong, we find that the infliction of the Vigil has been decreed and that the accused have in consequence made, no longer a 'qualified' confession, but the

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[1] V. 11-14.

[2] I. 1161, VIII. 68, note.

[3] VIII. 311 *seqq.*

[4] *O.Y.B.* 245-6, 335 (note 524).—There is no doubt whatever that, as Professor Hodell says, the pleading of Bottini which in *E.L.* is called Pamphlet 14 (*O.Y.B.* cxcv.-ccix.) was inserted in the wrong place by the collector of the documents; it belongs to the first stage of the trial, and should come next after Pamphlet 7. (Note *e.g.* that in Pamphlet 13 (*O.Y.B.* clxiii., *E.L.* 171) Bottini refers to a paragraph of Pamphlet 14, beginning with *Sed quatenus etiam*—*O.Y.B.* cxcviii., *E.L.* 202—, as belonging to his 'past response'.)—The second stage begins with Pamphlet 8.

[5] Compare *O.Y.B.* xxii. (*E.L.* 23) with *O.Y.B.* xxxv. (*E.L.* 34).

[6] See *e.g. O.Y.B.* clxiii., *E.L.* 171. Spreti contends that the Court's discretion is limited to dispensing with the 'urgency' of the proofs (*O.Y.B.* xliv., *E.L.* 43).

[7] *O.Y.B.* xxxv., xlvii., cxxv., cxcv., *E.L.* 34, 45, 133, 199.

[8] See *e.g. O.Y.B.* cxxv., *E.L.* 133, where Spreti gives the reason for the first condition above mentioned on the authority of Raynaldus: 'When an accused person cannot be condemned to death he must not, for the purpose of getting a confession from him, be exposed to a torture which may cause death'.

[9] *O.Y.B.* xxxvi., *E.L.* 34: *Delictum autem atrocissimum dicitur dumtaxat illud, pro quo pœna gravior quam simplicis mortis imponenda venit, veluti scissionis in frusta, combustionis, & similium.* Professor Hodell, confusing *frusta* with *frustra*, mistranslates *scissionis in frusta* by '*useless* mutilation'.

'avowal plump and plain'[1] which Browning's Arcangeli represents as having been secured at the very outset. It is not, however, quite clear from the records how far the Vigil was actually employed. We are told, indeed, by Spreti that its employment almost caused the death of one of the confederates, Alessandro Baldeschi, *qui per duas vices in eodem Tormento lethaliter defecit*[2], but he speaks less definitely about the other defendants; the confessions, he says, are null and void, because made *in fear* of the Vigil[3]. The less authoritative post-Browning pamphleteer, who notes that 'far less than had been imagined was it found needful to apply torture to ensure the confession of the assassins and of Guido, who more emphatically than the others persisted in denying his guilt', adds that 'notwithstanding this, simply at the *sight* of the torture his heart failed him and he made a full confession'[4].

We have seen that in the poem a person of 'the superior social section' based his opinion that Guido should not be tortured on the ground of his nobility. The same position is maintained by the poet's Arcangeli, who disputes 'validity of process' in the Court's decree—

> Inasmuch as a noble is exempt
> From torture which plebeians undergo
> In such a case: for law is lenient, lax,
> Remits the torture to a nobleman
> Unless suspicion be of twice the strength
> Attaches to a man born vulgarly:
> We don't card silk with comb that dresses wool[5].

And Guido is represented in his first monologue, not indeed as 'disputing validity'—for he is 'subdued near to mock-mildness'[6] in Book V.—, but as telling the judges that, though 'law thinks otherwise', the vulgar at least thought that 'noblemen were exempt from racking'[7]. In the Yellow Book Spreti, in claiming exemption for Guido, claims it on the same ground, but his claim relates to the

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[1] VIII. 312.

[2] *O.Y.B.* cxxv., *E.L.* 133; cf. VIII. 346-54. See also the Secondary Source, *O.Y.B.* 213, *E.L.* 265: 'Baldeschi made denial, even though "the cord" was administered to him twice, under which he swooned. Finally he confessed'.

[3] *Confessiones D. Guidonis . . . [et] eius sociorum sunt nullæ, propterea non attendendæ, cùm scilicèt emanauerint* metu *rigorosi Tormenti Vigiliæ.* Bottini in his answer says that confessions 'supervened' after the Vigil was decreed, and of their having been made in fear of it and ratified *eo* (? the fear or the torture) *cessante*; his words *decretum super Tormento D. Guidoni & sociis inferendo* Hodell mistranslates by 'the decree *which inflicted* the torture of the Vigil' etc. (*O.Y.B.* clxiii.-iv., *E.L.* 171-2).

[4] *O.Y.B.* 223, *E.L.* 278; I quote from the translation in Hall Griffin, p. 323. In XII. 414-16 Browning makes Bottini say of Guido:—

> much sport he contrived to make,
> Who at first twist, preamble of the cord,
> Turned white, told all, like the poltroon he was!

Cf. VIII. 404-7.

[5] VIII. 316-24. [6] I. 957-8. [7] V. 12-14.

Vigil only; it does not extend to 'simple' torture [1]. He says that, by the Constitutions of Paul V., the Vigil can only be inflicted on criminals who are liable to the penalty of a specially ignominious and infamous death, burning, for instance, or mutilation; but, he argues, nobles are not liable to ignominious and infamous penalties; therefore, he concludes, since Guido is noble, the Vigil cannot be inflicted upon him [2]. To this Bottini answers that it is the practice of the courts, when the employment of the Vigil is in question, to consider only the nature of the crime and not the 'quality' of the person. For 'otherwise', he says, 'neither nobles nor priests and *religiosi*, on whom an infamous penalty is not inflicted, could ever be exposed to that torture'; and, he adds, citing Farinacci, that 'nobility, especially in very atrocious crimes, confers no privilege as to the kind of torture' [3]. The two lawyers, it will be seen, agreed that nobility did confer a privilege as to the kind of *penalty*; some curious decisions are mentioned elsewhere in the Yellow Book which illustrate the fact. Thus a case is cited on the authority of Ulpian in which the Emperor Pius (for the same crime, apparently) sent a man of humble birth into perpetual exile, but 'relegated' a noble for a time only [4]; and the Book tells us of another in which some young nobles, having killed their wives under circumstances which do not concern us, were absolved by the Royal Court of Naples on account (partly) of their quality [5]. The 'heading or hanging as befitted ranks' [6], inflicted on Guido and his companions respectively, shows that in the ecclesiastical as well as the imperial and royal courts of Italy law respected persons.

III. Some general remarks upon judicial torture are made twice in the poem. In Browning's preliminary outline of the contents of Book V., after noting that torture was formerly 'here, there and

[1] The poem does not narrow the exemption-claim to the Vigil, but Browning was no doubt aware that the wider claim was inadmissible. In an interesting passage in Book VIII. (406-19) Arcangeli is made to say that some sixty years before nobles were trained to brave torture, which, presumably, the courts might call upon them to endure:—

> Guido Franceschini, nobleman,
> Bear pain no better! Everybody knows
> It used once, when my father was a boy,
> To form a proper, nay, important point
> I' the education of our well-born youth,
> That they took torture handsomely at need,
> Without confessing in this clownish guise.
> Each noble had his rack for private use,
> And would, for the diversion of a guest,
> Bid it be set up in the yard of arms,
> And take thereon his hour of exercise,—
> Command the varletry stretch, strain their best,
> While friends looked on, admired my lord could smile
> 'Mid tugging which had caused an ox to roar.

[2] *O.Y.B.* xxxvi., *E.L.* 34.
[3] *O.Y.B.* cciv., *E.L.* 207.
[4] *O.Y.B.* xxv., *E.L.* 27.
[5] *O.Y.B.* xxviii., *E.L.* 29.
[6] I. 126; cf. *e.g.* *O.Y.B.* 338, *E.L.* 238.

everywhere ' employed ' to tease the truth out of loth witness ', he traces the later attitude towards it of ' Religion ' and ' Humanity ' [1] with some scathing comment on the former. At the end of Book IV. (1621-31) his representative of cultured lay opinion reduces the use of torture *ad absurdum* ; ' abolish it ' is his advice.—Secular law in this as in other matters has lagged some little way behind secular opinion ; ecclesiastical law and opinion alike have lagged in Rome a long way behind both.

In respect of the former of these two propositions England has been an exception to the rule ; for, though prerogative has sometimes defied law, English law has never sanctioned torture as a means of extracting evidence or confession [2]. In Scotland opinion condemned torture before the end of the seventeenth century, when the future James II. so complacently employed and witnessed it ; but law did not catch up opinion till 1708, the year following the Act of Union [3]. On the continent the public opinion of civilized countries had decided that torture was ' a vile trick ' some time before law discarded it ; it was formally abrogated in Austria in 1776, in France in 1789, in Holland in 1798, in Prussia (where however Frederick the Great had ' practically ' abolished its use in 1740) in 1805. Even in the secular states of Italy, excepting the infamous kingdom of Naples, it had disappeared before the end of the eighteenth century ; in Tuscany, which led the way at the prompting of the humane Beccaria, it became illegal in 1776.

Meanwhile in the papal dominions torture was permitted by the paternal government till the issue of a Bull by Pius VII. in 1816. Browning had that event, presumably, in his mind when he wrote the last lines of the passage which, as he said, ' is all history ' :

> Then did Religion start up, stare amain,
> Look round for help and see none, smile and say
> " What, broken is the rack ? Well done of thee [4] !
> " Did I forget to abrogate its use ?
> " Be the mistake in common with us both !

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[1] See note on I. 985.

[2] I have not taken account here of the *peine forte et dure*, the infliction of which did not become unlawful in England till 1772. It was not a means of ' teasing the truth out of loth witness ', but of compelling a prisoner accused of felony to consent to be tried ; for he could not be tried without such consent. See Dicey, *Law and Opinion in England*, p. 79.

[3] A few years before Guido's trial the Scottish Claim of Right (1689) by denying the legality of torture ' without evidence or in ordinary cases ' admitted it ' by the plainest implication ' under precisely the conditions under which, as we have seen, the legality of the rigorous torment of the Vigil was admitted by Guido's advocates. See Macaulay, *History of England* (4-vol. edition), iii. p. 22, and a note of the author's in c. iv. of *The Bride of Lammermoor*. —For the admissions of Guido's advocates see *e.g. O.Y.B.* XXXV., *E.L.* 34 : *saevitum fuit huiusmodi tormentum* [that of the Vigil] *inferri non posse, nisi copulativè concurrant illa duo, videlicet quod delictum sit atrocissimum, quodque Reus sit graratus indiciis vrgentissimis.*

[4] *I.e.* of what the poet calls ' Humanity '.

"—One more fault our blind age shall answer for,
"Down in my book denounced though it must be
"Somewhere. Henceforth find truth by milder means!"
Ah but, Religion, did we wait for thee
To ope the book, that serves to sit upon,
And pick such place out, we should wait indeed![1]

Pius VII.'s Bull itself served to sit upon. When in 1849 the offices of the Inquisition at Rome were thrown open by the triumvirs who administered the short-lived Roman Republic many instruments of torture were discovered, 'all in good preservation and carefully kept as if for future use'[2]; and even in the latest days of the Temporal Power the hateful *equuleus* or *cavalletto* is said to have been revived by Cardinal Antonelli, with some support from a section at least of those whom he misgoverned[3].

[1] I. 1002-12.

[2] It has been maintained by clerical partisans that these instruments 'had been brought to the offices after the government took possession of them, in order to excite indignation' (Bolton King, *History of Italian Unity*, ii. pp. 390-92). Mr. King found it 'difficult to balance the evidence as to the genuineness of the discoveries'.

[3] Story, *Roba di Roma*, pp. 553-4.

APPENDIX VII

POPE INNOCENT XII.

The poem introduces us to a historical personage of importance in Antonio Pignatelli of Naples, Innocent XII. (1691–1700). By an unfortunate slip the *Encyclopædia Britannica* identified Browning's pope with Innocent XI. (1676–89), and the slip led the author of an American *Guide-Book to Browning*, who knew something about this Innocent XI., to suggest that the poet either confounded the two men with one another or deliberately gave to the later Innocent qualities which belonged only to the earlier. These suggestions have been supported in England by Dr. Berdoe [1], but no student of Browning should have put forward or countenanced the first, and the second is equally baseless. There are points in which Innocent XII. was like his namesake, but there are also points in which he was utterly unlike him, and both appear in Browning's portrait; which, subject to an important reservation which has been made in the Introduction to Book X. and to another which will be suggested presently, is altogether faithful.

Among the authorities about his pope which the poet, probably or certainly, consulted were two contemporary *Relazioni* of Roman affairs, sent from Rome by Venetian envoys to their government; these reports, which are summarized and in part quoted by Ranke in his *History of the Popes*, are therefore valuable to students of *The Ring and the Book*.

Domenico Contarini, whom Browning's 'man of rank, Venetian visitor at Rome' mentions as 'our Envoy' [2], reported on July 5, 1696, that Innocent XII. laboured to imitate Innocent XI., by whom he had been promoted to the Cardinalate and whose name he had assumed, making him his model in the practice of his government but eschewing his austerity and harshness [3]; that he abolished the sale of appointments, thereby depriving gold of its power and enabling virtue once again to reach the highest offices; that he gave audience

[1] *Browning Cyclopædia*, pp. 453-4. [2] XII. 117.
[3] See the pasquinade quoted in Appendix VIII. (*ad. fin.*).

most readily and owed much of his reputation to the facility of access which he afforded to the poor, which was a powerful check upon the ministers and judges. 'He has nothing in his thoughts', Contarini continued, 'but God, the poor, and the reform of abuses. He lives in the most abstemious retirement, devoting every hour to his duties without consideration for his health [1]. . . . He is full of love to the poor, and is endowed with all the great qualities that could be desired for a head of the church [2]. Could he only act for himself on all occasions he would be one of the first of Popes'.[3]

Niccolò Erizzo, who was perhaps Contarini's immediate successor, noted on October 29, 1702, that Innocent XII. closed the abyss of nepotism, and that, though he did much for the poor, lightened the public burdens, erected buildings for the Court and completed the construction of harbours, he nevertheless left a considerable sum in the treasury [4]. But, Erizzo added, he lived too long for the college of cardinals, whom he on his side did not esteem very highly; the cardinals considered that he sacrificed the interests of the Papal See by too conciliatory a deportment towards the sovereign courts [5].

It is precisely the characteristics which the envoys mentioned that Browning attributes to his pope. We find allusions in the poem to his hatred of nepotism [6], to his care for things maritime [7], to his gentleness [8], to his simple and abstemious life [9], to his love of the

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[1] On the other hand Gilbert Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, writing from Rome in 1685, says of Innocent XI.: 'The Pope is very careful of his Health, and doth never expose it; for, upon the least Disorder, he shuts himself up in his Chamber, and often keepeth his Bed, for the least Indisposition, many Days' (*Some Letters*, p. 249).

[2] Immediately after Innocent XII.'s death Saint-Simon wrote in his *Mémoires*: *C'était un grand et saint pape, vrai pasteur et vrai père commun, tel qu'il ne s'en voit plus que bien rarement sur la chaire de Saint-Pierre.*—Of Innocent XI. Burnet (*op. cit.* p. 248) says that all the Romans had a general contempt for his pontificate.

[3] Ranke, *History of the Popes*, iii. pp. 462-3.

[4] Was finance a strong point of the administration of Innocent XI.? Ranke says that he found a deficit which threatened public bankruptcy, but succeeded in raising the revenue to 'a not inconsiderable sum above the expenditure' (*op. cit.* ii p. 419). Burnet writes in a different tone: 'He doth not ease the People of their Taxes. . . . It is not possible for the People to live and pay the Taxes. . . . His Government is severe, and his Subjects are ruined' (*Some Letters*, pp. 196, 249).

[5] Ranke, *op. cit.* iii. p. 464.

[6] Hatred of nepotism was a point of resemblance between the two popes. By Innocent XI., says Ranke, the practice was at length altogether abolished; Burnet admits that 'he that reigns now doth not raise his family avowedly'. Nepotism revived during the short reign of Alexander VIII. (1689–91); Innocent XII. issued a bull against it in 1692. See in the poem I. 318, 323, III. 1475.

[7] XII. 52-3; cf. IX. 372-3.

[8] I. 289, XI. 56.

[9] I. 324, 1239. Abstemiousness and simplicity are further points of resemblance. Burnet (pp. 248-9) writes of Innocent XI.: 'His Life has been certainly very innocent, and free from all those publick Scandals that make a Noise in the World: And there is, at present, a Regularity in *Rome*, that deserveth great Commendation; for publick Vices are not to be seen there. His personal Sobriety is also singular'. See further in the note to I. 324.

poor [1], to his accessibility [2]. See also, more generally, I. 1222, XII. 593-4.

It will have been observed that gentleness and accessibility are points of contrast between Innocent XII. and Innocent XI. Another was foreign policy. When Contarini regretted that the later pope 'could not act for himself on all occasions', he was referring to Innocent's attitude towards foreign courts, which Erizzo noted that the cardinals censured as 'too conciliatory'. They meant that he was, as Macaulay represents him, too irresolute [3], and in the end too subservient to Louis XIV. The latter charge finds an echo in the language of two of Browning's *personæ*. His Guido bases an appeal to the Pope on the ground, true or false, that his death would 'outrage the Louis you so love' [4]; his Venetian of rank declares that proofs of Innocent's 'passion for France and France's pageant king' are 'now scandalously rife in Europe's mouth' [5]. Did Innocent, as Guido says, love Louis, and if so, why? Were the proofs of his passion for that pageant king as conclusive as, according to the Venetian, they were rife?

When Innocent became Pope in 1691 the French and Roman courts had long been at variance; their quarrels came to a head in 1682, when an assembly of French clergy at St. Germain passed the famous four resolutions (drawn up, it is said, by Bossuet) which set limits to papal authority and asserted the liberties of the Gallican church. The resolutions, confirmed by a royal edict, were promptly condemned by Innocent XI., who during the rest of his reign—he died in 1689—refused institution to the bishops whom the king appointed; his successor Alexander VIII. (it is said, reluctantly) did the same. Innocent XII., though he owed his election largely to French backing, at first continued this Gallophobe policy; he would not, for instance, give any support to our James II., regarding him as a tool in the hands of Louis. In 1693, however, the chief cause of quarrel was removed; the French clergy withdrew their resolutions, the king cancelled his edict; and the Pope was impatient for a complete reconciliation. For a while, indeed, a regard for his *entourage* obliged him to maintain, in his public acts, a strict neutrality between Louis and his enemies, but when the approaching death of the childless Charles II. of Spain gave urgency to the question of the Spanish succession he is said to have gone so far, during the last months of his own life and of that of Charles [6], as to advise him to name the French candidate as his successor. 'It was important', says Ranke, 'for the See of Rome that the mighty Prince who had abandoned that position of antagonism towards ecclesiastical prerogatives which had been a source of discord with

[1] I. 319, XI. 57, XII. 93. [2] X. 243 *seqq.*, XII. 90.
[3] 'Gentle and irresolute', says Macaulay (*History*, c. xix.); 'mild yet resolute', says Browning (I. 1222; cf. X. 236). [4] XI. 2280. [5] XII. 82-4.
[6] Innocent XII. died on September 27, Charles II. on November 3, 1700.

the Papacy should be shaken loose from the maritime powers, and attached exclusively to the interests of Catholicism' [1].

The *rapprochement* of Innocent and Louis, perhaps the subserviency of the former to the latter, was shown by an incident to which Browning's Venetian refers; he writes that 'somebody responsible'

> Assures me that the king of France has writ
> Fresh orders: Fénelon will be condemned [2].

Innocent was a tolerant theologian, but Louis was not; he sided strongly with Bossuet against Fénelon, whose *Explication des Maximes des Saints sur la Vie intérieure* (January 1697) advanced Quietist doctrines—doctrines which in Bossuet's judgment were inconsistent with Christianity; they aroused the King's *vif ressentiment*. Determined 'to cut the roots of Quietism' Louis promptly banished the Archbishop from Court, and brought 'all the batteries of French influence' to secure his condemnation by the Vatican. He pressed, almost 'ordered', Innocent to denounce the *Maximes*, assuring him that, in the judgment of all his bishops, the book was *très mauvais* and *très dangereux*, and he bombarded Cardinal Bouillon, his ambassador at Rome (XII. 112), with constant instructions to expedite a denunciation. Innocent, tardily and reluctantly, appointed commissioners to examine the *Maximes* in August 1697, but, though he lavished compliments upon Louis and assured him of his anxiety to second his intentions, he was not to be hustled; in this as in other matters, as Bouillon reported, Rome *n'aime pas à se commettre par des décisions précises*, and as late as September 1698 another cardinal declared *que ce seroit beaucoup, si cette affaire étoit finie dans quatre ans.* He under-estimated, however, as Browning's Venetian over-estimated, the pliability of Innocent; Fénelon and his doctrines were condemned in March 1699, though in the 'very moderate terms' which a reader of Book X. would expect [3]. Innocent summed up the controversy, into the merits of which we need not enter, with the *obiter dictum* that Fénelon erred by loving God too much, and Bossuet by loving his neighbour too little.—Bouillon's 'love for the delinquent', of which the Venetian speaks in XII. 67, is attested in a letter which he wrote to one of Fénelon's friends in 1698: *je l'aime*, he says, *pour le moins autant que vous pourriez l'aimer, et je l'estime plus que je n'ai jamais estimé personne dans l'Église*; and the difficulty of his position (XII. 66) is explained in an *Apologie* which he wrote later: *J'étais tout à la fois cardinal, ministre du roi, et l'ami de l'archevêque. Comme cardinal je pouvais*

[1] Ranke, *History of England*, v. p. 236. See also Ranke's *History of the Popes*, ii. pp. 425-8; *Cambridge Modern History*, v. p. 58; Macaulay, *History*, c. xix.

[2] XII. 63-5.

[3] Michelet says of Fénelon after his condemnation: '*Il gardait avec lui Rome même, qui n'avait agi que sous la pression de la France*' (*Histoire de France*, xiv. p. 111).

être juge, et je devais être neutre ; comme ministre, je devais être contraire à l'archevêque, qui était publiquement dans la disgrace du roi ; comme ami de ce prélat, je devais entrer dans tout ce qui pouvait contribuer à sa justification [1].

Some further evidence of Browning's intimate knowledge and of the faithfulness of his presentation of details concerning the papal history of the time will be found in the notes to X. 384-7, 1589-1604, XI. 2259-64, XII. 42-8.

[1] The story of the proceedings against Fénelon is told very fully in original documents printed in *Mélanges historiques* (tome iv.), from which I have quoted. It is, I think, certain that Browning read these documents.

APPENDIX VIII

MOLINOS AND THE MOLINISTS

We find distributed through the poem more than thirty references, most of them hostile, to the sect of the Molinists and to its founder [1]. The aged Luca Cini couples their doctrines with the murder of the Comparini as evidence that

> Antichrist surely comes and domesday's near [2];

to the *curato* of San Lorenzo it seems that such crimes as Guido's

> crop forth
> I' the course of nature when Molinos' tares
> Are sown for wheat [3];

a third speaker suggests that a magistrate must expect to be stigmatized as churl or Molinist if he will not manipulate the scales of justice in the interests of a friend [4]. Guido, posing in Book V. as orthodox, professes to regret that a duly baptized baby may grow up to be a Molinist [5], and to opine that 'poison-torture' might properly be applied to the next refractory member of the sect [6]. Caponsacchi, found straying from the primrose path in which the Church has placed him, is facetiously charged with Molinism by his bishop [7]; Pompilia, convicted of what another bishop assures her is heresy, is jestingly suspected of dipping into the Molinists' books [8]. These heretics, says Arcangeli, 'bar revenge', which is 'the natural privilege of man' [9]; their doctrines, he fears, have

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[1] It is only in Book IV. (Tertium Quid) that the Molinists are not mentioned. The omission is perhaps accidental, but it may mean that the superior person who spoke that monologue scorned to echo the sentiments of the vulgar, or that he tactfully avoided allusions to a heresy which had compromised people who moved in the selectest circles.

[2] II. 126-7.

[3] II. 174-6; cf. VI. 152.

[4] III. 989.

[5] V. 870.

[6] V. 1043; for other allusions in Book V. see lines 203, 223, 1238, 1838. Contrast Guido's altered tone in XI. 643, 2041; when he throws off the mask of orthodoxy he jeers at anti-Molinism.

[7] VI. 473.

[8] VII. 769-70.

[9] VIII. 697, 721-3.

'eaten so far into the bone' as to persuade people to pursue secular business on a sacred day [1]. Bottini declares that the corpses of Molinists might rightly serve, with those of Jews and Turks, to assist the anatomical studies of draughtsmen; thinks you must be of the sect if you are sourly censorious about matrons' midnight assignations; conjectures that the 'suppression of some Molinism i' the bud' may have been an imperative duty of our Lord's disciples; hints that Molinists may go so far as to raise doubts about the all-sufficiency of a death-bed confession [2]. And finally the Pope anticipates an admonition that if he refuses to save Guido he will supply Luthers and Calvins and Molinos with an excellent pretext for the bitterest attacks upon the Church [3].

The tone of most of these passages will have suggested, what is indeed the fact, that Molinism was a lost cause at the time of Guido's trial. Its founder, as we shall see, had been condemned more than ten years before, and was now dead; there had been a hue and cry after his followers, who had for the most part retracted—no Italian, perhaps, would have confessed in 1698 that he was one of them [4]. The high ecclesiastics to whom Arcangeli and Bottini addressed their pleadings may still have nursed resentment against their fallen adversaries, and in that case Browning might fittingly represent the advocates as trampling upon them *ad captandam benevolentiam*; but in the pleadings of the Yellow Book they do not even mention them. The populace again, following the Church's lead, had in 1687 been hot against the heretics; as Juvenal said and Mr. Shorthouse has reminded us, 'the mob of Remus'

> sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit
> Damnatos [5],

and it would have been delighted to see Molinos burn [6]. But the hatreds of mobs are usually short-lived and there is, perhaps, an anachronism in the representation of the outcry against him as still virulent in 1698; it must by that time have become, what Browning himself calls it, a 'frowsy tune'. He speaks of the Molinists as

> the sect *for a quarter of an hour*
> I' the teeth of the world, which, clown-like, loves to . . .
> Taste some vituperation [7];

ten years and more are a long quarter of an hour.

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1 VIII. 1074-9. 2 IX. 33, 566-8, 1048, 1499-1500.

3 X. 2062 *seqq.*

4 Quietism in a less exaggerated form was advocated by Fénelon in France in 1697; see Appendix VII.

5 Juvenal, *Sat.* x. 73-4; *John Inglesant*, c. xxxviii.

6 In a letter written at Rome on the day of the condemnation of Molinos it is said that there were cries of 'To the stake! To the stake!' (*fuoco, fuoco!*). The letter is translated in Bigelow's *Molinos the Quietist*, pp. 66-8 (see note below).

7 I. 307-14.

Whether, however, the world still vituperated Molinism in 1698 or had already forgotten it, its appearance would most certainly have made a deep and a lasting impression upon such a Pope as is portrayed in *The Ring and the Book*. When Browning in his Book I. makes his Innocent say

> Leave them alone . . . . those Molinists!
> Who may have other light than we perceive [1]

the words may or may not be appropriate to the Innocent of history, but they are entirely consonant with the mind of the soliloquist of Book X., and they illustrate and confirm what I have said in the Introduction to that Book. The speaker is so far influenced by the great traditions of his office as to feel that the Molinists denied recognized truths (if truths they are) 'at peril of their soul', but he probes much deeper than that. To him their teaching is the symptom of an on-coming destiny which may mean no less than the dissolution of an elaborately constituted system and the substitution of—who knows what? The Molinists may, he dimly surmises, be the heralds of a new era which will break up 'faith in the thing grown faith in the report' and will call upon us all to be

> obedient to some truth
> Unrecognized yet, but perceptible—

to

> Correct the portrait by the living face,
> Man's God, by God's God in the mind of man [2].

Who, then, it may be asked, was this Molinos who excited such deep hatred and such deep searchings of heart? And what did he stand for? The poet, for all his thirty and more references, withholds the information [3]; it is perhaps the duty of a commentator to supply it.

Miguel de Molinos [4] was born of noble parents in the diocese of Saragossa in 1627. He graduated in theology, became a priest, and developed in a peculiar direction, with a fanatic's logic, the doctrine of contemplative passivity and receptivity (Quietism) which he had

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[1] I. 315-16. [2] X. 1864-74.

[3] We read in II. 178 and in III. 91-7 of a 'doctrine of the Philosophic Sin' which Antichrist or Molinos disseminates, but which the poet does not describe. He found the expression in the First Anonymous Pamphlet (*O.Y.B.* cxlvi., *E.L.* 150): 'Perhaps an attempt was being made at Rome to bring in the power of sinning against the Law of God with impunity, together with the doctrine of Molinos and the philosophic sin, which was checked by the authority of the Holy Office'. The nature of this philosophic sin, which scandalized 'somebody' at Pompilia's bedside, will appear from the quotation which ends this Appendix.

[4] The well-known account of Molinos and Molinism in the later chapters of *John Inglesant* is most interesting, but its chronology is most puzzling. In Mr. John Bigelow's lucid and altogether admirable *Molinos the Quietist* (New York, 1882) will be found translations of the Papal Bull which condemned Molinos in 1687 and of other important documents.

imbibed from the followers of his fellow-countrywoman St. Theresa (1515–82). He came to Italy at some unrecorded date and by his high character, his personal attractiveness, his intellectual gifts and the fascinating novelty of his tenets, won innumerable adherents everywhere, in Rome and Naples more especially. At Rome he became 'a director of fashionable consciences'[1], an 'efficient gleaner of souls', as Mr. Strachey says of Manning, 'who moved in the best society'[2]; among his friends and followers he could count Cristina, the brilliant and eccentric ex-queen of Sweden. Ecclesiastics of high position, one of whom was Cardinal d'Estrées, the French ambassador, gathered round him, and in 1676 Innocent XI., the newly elected Pope, lodged him in the Vatican, took him—so it was believed—for his spiritual director, and even purposed to make him a cardinal. It had long been known that Molinos would embody his opinions in a book to be called *The Spiritual Guide*, and in 1675 the book had appeared, with 'approbations' from members of the Inquisition. It was most enthusiastically received: we are told that in five years it passed through no less than twenty editions.

It was not till 1680 that a prognostic of trouble was first discernible, but it was such a cloud as could scarcely disturb the serenity of the sky. It was, indeed, no bigger than a man's hand; it was a cautious tract by a Jesuit, hinting, without asperity or direct mention of Molinos, at dangers inherent in the Method of Quietism. The cloudlet melted away; in 1682 the Inquisition approved the Method and condemned its critic. Meanwhile, however, the more far-sighted Jesuits were beginning to see that Molinism was in fact a challenge to the whole ecclesiastical system, for its founder taught that confession is no binding Christian duty, that there is no need for human intermediaries between the soul and God, that all external rites are superfluities. Despairing of the Pope[3] they invited and secured the help of Louis XIV., then, as always, their close ally, and by his command the most hectoring protests were made to the Vatican; the Pope, so the King complained, was offering cordial hospitality to 'a corrupter of souls, a notorious scoffer at the practices and the ceremonies of the Church'[4]. The French ambassador, whom Molinos knew successively as adherent, as friend, as spy, as betrayer[5], and as open enemy, was referred

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1 Lord St. Cyres, *François de Fénelon*, p. 78.

2 *Eminent Victorians*, p. 54.

3 Prayers were offered in Jesuit monasteries for the Pope's conversion to Romanism (Bigelow, p. 24). The prayers were heard, for soon after the arrest of Molinos Innocent abandoned him. In a letter written in 1685 he is reported to have said, *Veramente siamo ingannato*, 'Truly we have been deceived' (*ibid.* p. 49).

4 *Ibid.* p. 27.

5 'To most men occupying the attitude which d'Estrées had taken towards Molinos and his doctrines these orders from Versailles would have been embarrassing. But d'Estrées was a courtier, and he enjoyed an official residence at Rome extremely. *Before the cock could crow thrice*, he was ready to burn Molinos' (*ibid.* pp. 26-27). See also *John Inglesant*, c. xxxvii.

by Innocent XI. to the Inquisitors, whom he soon convinced that here was a heresy for them to hunt. A long secret trial, in which imprisonment and torture were freely employed and every calumny, however gross, was greedily believed, ended as the King and the Jesuits desired. On September 3, 1687, the church of S. Maria sopra Minerva, which had been the scene, some forty years before, of the condemnation and of the abjuration of Galileo, was the scene of the condemnation, and possibly also of the abjuration, of Molinos, who, unlike Galileo, was kept fast in prison till the day of his death, December 28, 1696. Readers of *The Ring and the Book* will be inclined to ask, Why, if Innocent XII., who became Pope in 1691, was as sympathetic towards him as the poem represents, was he content to keep him there ?

Many excellent expositions of Molinos's teaching have been published, and some of them are by contemporaries ; of these latter I shall print one in full. In 1685-6 a famous Scotchman visited Rome, Naples, and other Italian towns—no less a person than Gilbert Burnet, who was to be William III.'s Bishop of Salisbury, the historian of ' his own time '. On December 8, 1685, after the arrest of Molinos but before his condemnation, this competent observer wrote from Rome as follows to a friend :—

The new Method of *Molinos* doth so much prevail in *Naples*, that 'tis said he hath above twenty thousand Followers in this City. And since this hath made some Noise in the World, and yet is generally but little understood, I will give you some Account of him. He is a *Spanish* Priest, that seems to be but an ordinary Divine, and is certainly a very ill Reasoner, when he undertakes to prove his Opinions. He hath writ a Book, which is intitled, *Il Guida Spirituale*, which is a short Abstract of the mystical Divinity. The Substance of the whole is reduced to this, *That in our Prayers and other Devotions, the best Methods are to retire the Mind from all gross Images, and so to form an Act of Faith, and thereby to present our selves before God, and then to sink into a Silence and Cessation of new Acts, and to let God act upon us, and so to follow his Conduct.* This way he prefers to the Multiplication of many new Acts, and different Forms of Devotion ; and he makes small Account of corporal Austerities, and reduces all the Exercises of Religion to this Simplicity of Mind. He thinks this is not only to be proposed to such as live in religious Houses, but even to Secular Persons, and by this he hath proposed a great Reformation of Men's Minds and Manners. He hath many Priests in *Italy*, but chiefly in *Naples*, that dispose those who confess themselves to them, to follow his Method. The *Jesuits* have set themselves much against this Conduct, as foreseeing, that it may much weaken the Empire that Superstition hath over the Minds of People, that it may make Religion become a more plain and simple thing, and may also open a Door to Enthusiasms. They also pretend, that his Conduct is factious and seditious ; that this may breed a Schism in the Church. And because he saith in some Places of his Book, *That the Mind may rise up to such a Simplicity in its Acts*,

that it may rise in some of its Devotions to God immediately, without contemplating the Humanity of Christ, they have accused him as intending to lay aside the Doctrine of Christ's *Humanity*; tho' 'tis plain that he speaks only *of the Purity of some single Acts*. Upon all those Heads they have set themselves much against *Molinos*; and they have also pretended, that some of his Disciples have infused into their Penitents, *That they may go and communicate, as they find themselves disposed, without going first to Confession*: which they thought weakened much the Yoke by which the Priests subdue the Consciences of the People to their Conduct. Yet he was much supported, both in the Kingdom of *Naples*, and in *Sicily*: He had also many Friends and Followers at *Rome*. So the *Jesuits*, as a Provincial of the Order assured me, finding that they could not ruine him by their own Force, got a great King, that is now extremely in the Interests of their Order, to interpose, and to represent to the Pope the Danger of such Innovations. It is certain, the Pope understands the Matter very little, and that he is possessed with a great Opinion of *Molinos's* Sanctity; yet, upon the Complaints of some Cardinals, that seconded the Zeal of that King, he and some of his Followers were clapt in the Inquisition, where they have been now for some Months: But they are still well used, which is believed to flow from the good Opinion that the Pope hath of him, who saith still, that tho' he may have erred, yet he is certainly a good Man. Upon this Imprisonment, *Pasquin* said a pleasant thing. In one week, one Man had been condemned to the Gallies for somewhat he had said, another had been hanged for somewhat he had writ, and *Molinos* was clapt in Prison, whose Doctrine consisted chiefly in this, *That Men ought to bring their Minds to a State of inward Quietness*; from which the Name of *Quietists* was given to all his Followers. The *Pasquinade* upon all this was, *Si parliamo, in Galere; si scrivemmo, Impiccati: si stiamo in quiete, all' Sant' Officio: e che bisogna fare?* If we speak, we are sent to the Gallies; if we write, we are hanged; if we stand quiet, we are clapt up in the Inquisition: What must we do then?[1] Yet his Followers at *Naples* are not daunted, but they believe he will come out of this Trial victorious[2].

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[1] This pasquinade, which was current soon after the arrest, is quoted in two letters written in August 1685 (Bigelow, pp. 48, 50).

[2] *Some Letters, Containing an Account of what seem'd most remarkable in travelling thro' Switzerland, Italy, Some Parts of Germany, etc. In the Years 1685 and 1686.* Written by G. Burnet, D.D. (London, 1724), pp. 209-12.

APPENDIX IX

THE POSY OF BROWNING'S RING (I. 1391-1416)

O lyric Love, half angel and half bird
And all a wonder and a wild desire,—
Boldest of hearts that ever braved the sun,
Took sanctuary within the holier blue,
And sang a kindred soul out to his face,—
Yet human at the red-ripe of the heart—
When the first summons from the darkling earth
Reached thee amid thy chambers, blanched their blue,
And bared them of the glory—to drop down,
To toil for man, to suffer or to die,—
This is the same voice: can thy soul know change?
Hail then, and hearken from the realms of help!
Never may I commence my song, my due
To God who best taught song by gift of thee,
Except with bent head and beseeching hand—
That still, despite the distance and the dark,
What was, again may be; some interchange
Of grace, some splendour once thy very thought,
Some benediction anciently thy smile:
Never conclude, but raising hand and head
Thither where eyes, that cannot reach, yet yearn
For all hope, all sustainment, all reward,
Their utmost up and on,—so blessing back
In those thy realms of help, that heaven thy home,
Some whiteness which, I judge, thy face makes proud,
Some wanness where, I think, thy foot may fall!

The 'posy' falls into two parts. In the first (1391-1402), after the elaborated vocative of lines 1391-1400 and the parenthetical question of line 1401, the poet appeals in line 1402 to his 'lyric Love'[1] to hearken to him from heaven, 'from the realms of help'.

[1] It is a curiosity of literature that the author of a book called *The Religion of our Literature* should have written as follows: 'Though Lyric Love is here a quality personified, it seems to be so interchangeably with Christ. . . . We have heard that some interpreters have actually considered them to be addressed to his wife' (quoted by Berdoe, *Browning Cyclopædia*, pp. 293-4).

In the second (1403-16) he records a solemn vow which contains a prayer and a thanksgiving to which he would have her give ear. He vows that he will never begin his song [1] without praying her, with bent head and beseeching hand, to inspire him still, and will never end it without blessing her, with hand and head raised, for the inspiration which he is well assured that he will have received. —That such is the general drift of the passage is unquestionable; I must therefore dissent *in limine* from the suggestion of the Rev. J. J. G. Graham [2] that the poet *causes the poetess to bless back* to him what the last two lines express. The word 'blessing' in 1413 is in apposition to 'raising' in 1410, and the person who 'raises hand and head' and who therefore 'blesses back' is obviously the poet.

If in its general drift the passage is clear, in some points of detail it is not so clear; but its only serious difficulty lies in its last two lines [3]. What are the 'whiteness' and the 'wanness' of those lines, and what do the relative clauses which describe them mean? Critics quote the posy in full and very justly extol it, but except in the *Browning Society's Papers* I have found no published answers to these questions. In those papers I find answers from the critic whom I have named and from Dr. Furnivall [4].

Mr. Graham explains the 'whiteness' of the passage as 'goodness, purity, innocence, guileless truth, unselfish love—perfect in heaven, marred and stained on earth'; the 'wanness' as 'the exaggeration of whiteness [5], the excess of all this, angelic goodness' and so forth. The poetess, he says, 'is *all* whiteness, *all* wanness' in heaven, and she conveys to the poet *some* measure of these qualities (for it is only to some that we on earth can attain)—'some of her own whiteness, the idea of which makes her face, he judges, even in heaven to shine with a . . . prouder joy; some of her own wanness, reflected on him from her realms of help, where on the golden floor, he thinks, her foot may fall'. The critic cautiously adds, and I share his misgiving, that Browning may not have meant all this, but he comforts himself with the reflection that 'we may lawfully find in the creative work of great bards meanings which even they themselves never meant nor intended'. Very possibly; but great bards mean or intend something, and it is the first duty of their interpreters to discover, if they can, what that something is.

Dr. Furnivall, whose exegesis of the passage claims respect both from the scrupulous care which he lavished on his 'grammatical analysis' and from the fact that 'the poet himself decided' at least one doubt for him [6], wrote: 'The "whiteness" is the glory round

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1 *I.e.*, says Furnivall, his work upon *The Ring and the Book*.
2 *The Browning Society's Papers*, part xi. p. 389.
3 On some points of less difficulty see the notes to Book I.
4 *Op. cit.* part ix. pp. 167-8.
5 Mr. Graham quotes from *Parleyings*, p. 209, the phrase 'whiten to wanness' in support of his interpretation of the word.
6 See note on I. 1399-1400.

the person, halo-robed, of the Poetess—with, perchance, white clad angels and saints—in Heaven; the "wanness", Heaven's lucent floor'; and he added that the poet, 'for her aid to him', blessed the poetess back in Heaven—'her in her glorified body, . . . her, as she paces the floor of Heaven, wan with unearthly light'[1]. These last words are open to the obvious criticism that the whiteness and the wanness are not introduced by the poet as simply descriptive of the poetess in heaven; he blesses back, not her in her whiteness and her wanness, but the whiteness and the wanness themselves.

A similar but more attractive interpretation of the passage has been suggested to me by my friend Canon Cruickshank of Durham, who writes as follows:

I have often puzzled over the lines in question. The only solution I can frame is this. Mrs. Browning was an invalid, we know; therefore presumably white and wan. The poet regards her as an angel; her characteristics in heaven will still be those which she had on earth, and her environment will have elements which she displayed on earth, for heaven and the angels are entirely congruous. Consequently there will be whiteness and wanness in heaven where she moves. Her pale face will make the surrounding whiteness proud, and there will be wanness where 'her foot may fall'.—The thoughts really at work in the poet's mind are two: (1) she is still the inspiration of his life and his muse, though removed for a time; and (2) she will be recognizable in heaven when he joins her. She who was white and wan on earth will though glorified be his wife still in heaven. The latter thought is not indeed expressed, but I think it is in his heart of hearts, inspiring the whole passage.

It will be seen that Canon Cruickshank, who gives a much more satisfactory meaning to 'wanness' than the Browning Society interpreters, agrees with Dr. Furnivall in thinking that it is in a glorified vision of his lyric Love that the poet will find that 'inspiration of his muse' for which he has prayed. But the question arises whether he did not count on a less mystical and more definite inspiration. A reader who has read carefully to the end of line 1414 and then pauses for a moment will, I think, very confidently expect that what the poet is blessing back will prove to be some such help in his work as the poetess gave him while on earth, some such help as he has prayed that she will still give him from heaven,

> some interchange[2]
> Of grace, some splendour once thy very thought,
> Some benediction anciently thy smile.

Can 'wanness' and 'whiteness' be so interpreted as to fulfil this expectation?

[1] The French version to which I have referred in the note to I. 1391-1416 runs as follows: *renvoyant ainsi . . . un pieux hommage à quelque blanc rayon fier du reflet de ton visage, à quelque pâle nuage, rencontré peut-être sous tes pas.*

[2] See note on I. 1407.

Mr. A. H. Smith, a friend who has often come to my rescue in a difficulty, agrees with me that the words ought to be so interpretable and is inclined to think that they can be so interpreted. He suggests that they refer, not to characteristics of the poetess in heaven, but to characteristics of Browning's own poem:—

The Ring and the Book [he writes] has moments and episodes of splendour (highly wrought and noble passion, etc. —all this is the 'whiteness'), and again a world of suffering and of things pitiful ('wanness'). The splendour is represented as reflected from the face of the poet's wife in heaven and the sad places are places in which she (who was always so ready to answer the call of sorrow and 'to toil for man, to suffer or to die') would be ready to walk and which would show the traces of her footsteps. Browning, communing with her in heaven, thanks her for everything which, flowing from her inspiration, is splendid and pitiful in his poem. As the reference to 'whiteness' catches up and repeats 1407-9, so the reference to 'wanness' catches up 1397-1400. One might perhaps argue in support of this interpretation that the use of the word 'some' throughout—'some interchange', 'some splendour', 'some benediction', 'some whiteness', 'some wanness'—indicates that Browning is on the same tack throughout, the tack being that all that is best in his poem comes from his lyric Love. . . . It seems very likely [he adds] that the choice of the words whiteness and wanness was half-consciously dictated in the way Canon Cruickshank suggests. Physical and moral and metaphysical associations were probably all mixed up in the two words, which certainly give one the impression that they were well packed with meaning for Browning.

APPENDIX X

'ABATE,—CARDINAL,—CHRIST,—MARIA,—GOD, . . .
'POMPILIA, WILL YOU LET THEM MURDER ME?'

If the climax of Guido's appeal at the end of Book XI. is not what R. H. Hutton was inclined to call it, 'the *only* purely dramatic passage in Browning's whole picture' [1], it is assuredly the most dramatic; it thrills the reader with its final vocative [2], the most arresting single word, perhaps, in English literature. It thrills the reader, but how should he interpret it?

Bishop Westcott noted as a speciality of Browning that he discerns a spark of goodness in very evil people and 'thereby restores assurance as to the destiny of creation'; the poet, he wrote, 'has dared to look on the darkest and meanest forms of action and passion . . . and has brought back to us from this universal survey a conviction of hope'. Of this the Bishop found an instance in the invocation of Pompilia; he saw in it a suggestion that Guido, however degraded and debased, was 'not past hope to the spiritual eye'. 'Up to the last', he continued, 'with fresh kindled passion, the great criminal reasserts his hate. . . . The end comes. The ministers of death claim him. In his agony he summons every helper whom he has known or heard of . . . and then the light breaks through the blackest gloom. In the supreme moment he has known what love is, and knowing it has begun to feel it. The cry, like the intercession of the rich man in Hades for his five brethren [3], is a promise of far-off deliverance' [4]. The same view is taken by Sir Henry Jones [5] and Professor Hodell [6]; and Mr. Arthur

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[1] *Literary Essays*, p. 232.

[2] We may compare with it the hardly less dramatic vocative 'Hakeem!', Anael's dying cry in *The Return of the Druses*.

[3] The comparison is not felicitous. Dives intercedes (as the Bishop says) for his brethren ('lest they also come into this place of torment'), just as in *Pippa Passes* the sinful Ottima intercedes for her paramour ('Not me—to him, O God, be merciful!'). Guido's appeal is for himself ('will you let them murder me?').

[4] *Religious Thought in the West*, pp. 253-4, 265-6.

[5] *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 117.

[6] *O.Y.B.* 277. Hodell calls the invocation a 'cry *for forgiveness*'.

Symons, noting how in 'this superb climax' Guido 'reveals in a breath his own malignant cowardice and the innocence of his murdered wife', asks parenthetically the unexpected question, 'Is it with a touch of remorse, of saving penitence?'[1]

That the alleged speciality of Browning is a real speciality is indisputable[2]; he discerned 'sparks' in most unpromising 'clods'. I cannot believe, however, that the invocation means that he discerned any spark in Guido; you must not read what you take to be a poet's psychological system into every line and word of his dramatic work. It is true that the Pope, in the noble passage which ends Book X., expresses a (far from confident) hope that by 'a suddenness of fate' the truth may be

> flashed out by one blow,
> And Guido see, one instant, and be saved;

but the truth of Pompilia's goodness is not suddenly flashed upon Guido; his conviction of it has inspired some of the ugliest parts of his soliloquy; it revolts him. He remembers, however, that she found excuses for him—'he did not make himself' (XI. 941, 2100); that she desired no revenge—he scorns her 'abnegation' of it (2086); that she had 'no touch of hate'—'it would prove her hell', he says, 'if I reached mine' (2089-90); and the thought is 'flashed' upon him that he can therefore count upon her intercession, which, as coming from one whom he has so deeply wronged, should have a marvellous efficacy. Prompted accordingly, not by a knowledge of what love is, nor by 'remorse and saving penitence', but by the instinct of self-preservation, he appeals to her 'as to a power almost beyond God's'[3]; despairing of all other help he sees in her his last resource. But then he has not said one word about her 'which is not set on fire by a hell of hatred'; his 'outbursts of tiger fierceness'[4] against her have left the foam still upon his lips[5]; so that of all powers in heaven and on earth she is precisely the one to whom appeal is barred.

The invocation exerts its arresting force on different minds in different ways. For some of us its impressiveness lies, not in its 'restoring assurance as to the destiny of creation', nor in its furnishing an extreme example of the poet's optimism, but in its startling

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1 *Introduction to Browning*, p. 146.
2 See for example the last lines of *Apparent Failure*.
3 R. H. Hutton, *loc. cit.*
4 The expressions quoted are Mr. Stopford Brooke's (*Browning*, p. 360).—As Pompilia says of Guido, 'hate was the truth of him' (VII. 1727).
5 He has said, only twenty lines before that containing his appeal,

> I grow one gorge
> To loathingly reject Pompilia's pale
> Poison my hasty hunger took for food (2404-6).

revelation of the unspeakable meanness of a lost soul. When fate has mastered Iago, he declares that 'from this time forth' he 'never will speak word', and when asked 'What, not to pray?' he makes no answer. 'Well, thou dost best', says Othello[1]; he does better, to my mind, than Guido.

[1] *Othello*, 5. 2. 304-6.

APPENDIX XI

REVISIONS OF THE TEXT OF THE POEM

The late Lord Courtney of Penwith sent to *The Times* (Literary Supplement, February 25, 1909) 'A note on *The Ring and the Book*' on the main purport of which I have commented elsewhere [1]. He was chiefly concerned with what he regarded as an error in the poem, but he quoted incidentally from a letter which Browning wrote him on May 14, 1881, and from his quotation I extract the following:

> I have not looked at the poem . . . since it appeared in print – reserving that business for a future day (which ought not to be delayed much longer), when the whole work will be carefully revised. At present I have the faintest memory concerning any particular part or passage of it.

The extract is of extraordinary interest. It reminds us, in the most compelling way, of what we are told was the poet's normal attitude towards his past work. Matthew Arnold used to say that an author could not be always reading his own books, and no author was less disposed to do so than was Browning. Conscious, if ever poet was, of the high calling by the exercise of which he was to 'save his soul' he pressed forward, forgetting much that was behind; he delegated the close perusal and the interpretation of his published poems (according to a perhaps mythical anecdote) to the members of the Browning Society. But he cannot, of course, have been speaking very seriously when he professed to have but the faintest memory of any particular passage of his *magnum opus*, even of that very particular passage (relating as it does to a crucial incident of Pompilia's story) at which his correspondent was inclined to cavil. He had not, we may be sure, forgotten 'O lyric Love', or 'Pompilia, will you let them murder me?', or the endings of the monologues of his hero and heroine, or many other things that are unforgettable. Nor, again, can we interpret without much latitude his statement that he had not looked at the poem since it appeared in print; unless Lord Courtney omitted some important qualification, it

[1] See the notes on I. 511-15 and III. 1065-6.

cannot be reconciled with fact. A second edition of *The Ring and the Book* appeared in 1872[1] and it was no mere reprint of the first edition of 1868–9; the author had subjected the text to a thorough revision in the interval. Seventeen new lines had been added—an addition which, if small in proportion to the 21,000 lines already there, could not, one would have thought, have been forgotten by the man who made it—, and not only had these new lines been added; like his Arcangeli, Browning 'stuck in this' and 'threw out that'; he retained his old lines, it is true, but, like his Bottini, he 'pruned and pared'. The stickings-in and the throwings-out, the prunings and the parings, taken one by one, were not often important, but taken together they come to a good deal; that many of them, such as most of the changes in punctuation, are inconspicuous and even trivial is in itself good evidence that the revision of 1872 was deliberate and careful.

We have seen that nine years later the poet looked forward (it would seem, without enthusiasm) to a further revision; it was a business, he felt, 'which ought not to be delayed much longer'. The business was undertaken and completed, for the sixteen-volume[2] edition of his collected works, in 1888–9, shortly before his death. In this second revision no new lines were added, but in other respects, though somewhat more extensive, it was of the same kind as that of 1872.

I have compared the text of the different editions, and here are the general results of the comparison in respect of three of the twelve Books. Some of the changes introduced were of course merely consequent on others.

In Book II. there are over 120 differences between the first edition (A) and that of 1888–9 (C); about half of them are in wording and about half in punctuation and the like. About a third of the changes had already been made in the second edition (B).

In Book III. there are about 110 differences between A and C, of which about 65 are in wording. Rather less than a third of the changes had been made in B.

In Book XII. there are over 130 differences between A and C; they are distributed roughly as in Book II. More than a third but less than half of the changes had been made in B, in which several new lines were introduced.[3]

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[1] I have seen no copy of an 1872 edition of Vol. II. (containing Books IV., V., VI.) and am not sure that one was printed.

[2] A seventeenth volume, containing *Asolando* and some 'Biographical and Historical Notes', was afterwards added to this edition.

[3] A list of the changes in Book XII. is given at the end of this Appendix. As that Book is much shorter than either Book II. or Book III. it is clear from the figures given above that in dealing with its text Browning was more disposed to alteration.

The changes in punctuation are included in the above statistics not merely because they are sometimes important, but for two special reasons besides: (1) for that already noticed, viz. that such changes, especially in a work which abounds in long and intricate sentences, require a close study of the text such as Browning forgot that he had made; and (2) because, though his punctuation was not always felicitous, he was supremely alive to its importance. He resented most keenly any garbling of his text by people who misplaced his stops, for it led, as he told a correspondent, to the charge of unintelligibility being brought against him—against 'your poor friend, who can kick nobody'[1]; and Mrs. Orr assures us that his punctuation 'was always made with the fullest sense of its significance to any but the baldest style, and of its special importance to his own'[2]. Unfortunately, in spite of his sense of its significance and in spite of the two revisions, much faulty punctuation appears in the latest editions; necessary stops are sometimes absent and unnecessary ones present; worst of all, some quite impossible stops, even impossible full stops, have crept and intruded into the text[3].

The changes of wording, though not always important, are almost always improvements. They usually substitute clearness for obscurity, or correct for loose grammar, or ordinary for Browningese English, or a sound for an unsound emphasis, or a smooth and rhythmical for a turbid and obstructed flow[4], or a lively and forcible for a tame or feeble word or phrase. One change of the last kind may be of interest to persons concerned in the production of books. In the first edition Bottini introduces his extract from Fra Celestino's sermon thus:

> But what say you to one impertinence
> Might move a man? That monk, you are to know, . . .[5]

'Man' is clearly very tame, and in the second edition it makes way for 'stoic'; but 'stoic', if much more forcible than 'man', is not strikingly appropriate, and (though its metrical peculiarity is not uncommon in Browning) it is not rhythmical. In the final edition we read 'stone', which *is* rhythmical and is absolutely right otherwise. The poet, we may conjecture, deleted 'man' and wrote 'stone' in the margin on his first revision; 'stoic' was perhaps simply a misreading of his handwriting by a too well-informed printer.—The alterations, even the additions, rarely (if ever) introduce a new thought or a new fact, and do not often correct a misstatement; in one place indeed a correction is made, where Browning

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1 Mrs. Orr, *Life*, pp. 357-8.
2 *Life*, p. 360.
3 See X. 738-40, note; cf. VI. 136, VIII. 1048.
4 'Metamorphosis the immeasurable' (X. 1616) is not a very elegant line, but it is better than 'The immeasurable metamorphosis', which appeared in the first edition.
5 XII. 444-5.

does not often slip [1], in a scriptural reference ; he found that he had confused Hophni and Uzzah [2].

Lists are appended (1) of the lines which were added to the poem in 1872—none were added in the later revision ; and (2) of the changes in wording introduced on the two revisions of Book XII., which is chosen, not because these changes are specially important —they are not—, but because that Book is the shortest. I have not included in this latter list the very numerous changes in punctuation to which reference has been made above.

1. LINES ADDED TO THE POEM IN 1872

All the additions occur in later Books, viz. in VIII., IX., XI., and XII. Book X. is marked in the margin of the second and later editions as containing 2135 lines against the 2134 of the first, but this inconvenient change is due, not to the addition of a line, but to a peculiarity in the numbering ; line 92 of the first edition was distributed afterwards between two paragraphs and was therefore, in accordance with Browning's practice, counted as two lines.

BOOK VIII

1. The first edition (A) has in 402

> Shaming truth so !

For which the second edition (B) substitutes (its 402-3)

> Undoing, on his birthday,—what is worse,—
> My son and heir !

[The change is welcome, as is every reference to the young Giacinto. 'Shaming truth so ! ' has no great value.]

2. After A's 540 (B's 541) B adds

> *Absit*, such homage to vile flesh and blood !

[This new ending of the paragraph is thoroughly characteristic of the speaker.]

3. In A's 1208-11 we have

> " Punishment exceeds offence :
> " You might be just but you were cruel too ! "
> If so you stigmatise the stern and strict,
> Still, he is not without excuse—

For which is substituted in B (its 1210-16)

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[1] See, however, the note on IV. 196. [2] IV. 834.

" Punishment were pardoned him,
" But here the punishment exceeds offence :
" He might be just, but he was cruel too ! "
Why, grant there seems a kind of cruelty
In downright stabbing people he could maim,
(If so you stigmatise the stern and strict)
Still, Guido meant no cruelty—

[The meaning was clear enough in A, but there is some gain in getting rid of the application of ' you ' to different persons in A's 1209 and 1210.]

4. After A's 1214 B, changing the punctuation at the end of that line to a comma, adds (its 1220)

Merely disfigure, nowise make them die.

[The addition is unnecessary.]

5. After A's 1240 B, removing the note of exclamation at the end of that line, adds (its 1247)

Obtained, these natural enemies of man !

[A decided improvement ; A's ' these ' in its 1240 stands for ' to these ' ; the removal of the Browningism here conduces to clearness.]

6. For A's 1449

Our Cardinal engages read my speech :

B substitutes (its 1456-7)

Our Cardinal engages to go read
The Pope my speech, and point its beauties out.

[Another improvement ; indeed the change is almost necessary. Arcangeli's point is that the Cardinal will read his speech *to the Pope.*]

7. After A's 1507 B inserts (its 1516)

By application of his tongue or paw :

[A much needed addition.]

BOOK IX

A's 498-500

Suppose this man could love, though, all the same—
From what embarrassment she sets him free
Should one, a woman he could love, speak first— 500

becomes in B (its 498-502)

Despite the coil of such encumbrance here,
Suppose this man could love, unhappily,
And would love, dared he only let love show !
In case the woman of his love, speaks first, 501
From what embarrassment she sets him free !

[It is perhaps doubtful whether the expansion of the passage improves it. The misplaced comma after 'love' in B's 501 is due to its having followed the word, quite correctly, in A's 500.]

BOOK XI

1. After A's 923 B adds (its 924), removing the semicolon after 'orb',

> As the eye of God, since such an eye there glares :

[The addition is not necessary, but it makes for clearness.]

2. After A's 1087 B adds (its 1089), changing the stop after 'toil' to a comma,

> " Proper appreciation and esteem ! "

[Some such addition was much wanted.]

BOOK XII

1. After A's 606 B inserts (its 607)

> " Plagued here by earth's prerogative of lies,

[The words are characteristic of the speaker, but the addition is not necessary.]

2. For A's 607

> " Should learn to love what he may speak one day.

B substitutes (its 608-9)

> " Now learns to love and long for what, one day,
> " Approved by life's probation, he may speak.

[The change makes the paragraph end with more impressiveness and dignity.]

3. A's 613

> " Yet weigh the worth of worldly prize foregone [*sic*],

is expanded in B (its 615-16) into

> " Yet what forbids I weigh the prize forgone,
> " The worldly worth ? I dare, as I were dead,

[The change softens the contrast between A's 612 and 613.]

4. Between A's 622 and 623 B, which changes the 'dream' of A's 622 to 'doubt', inserts (its 626)

> " Many a dream of life spent otherwise—

[The new line enhances the beauty of the passage.]

2. VARIATIONS OF WORDING IN BOOK XII

	A Original Edition (1868–9)	B Second Edition (1872)	C Final Revision (1888–9)
79	the one	its one	*as B*
85	the man	*as A*	our man
167	Guido was last to . . . steps	To . . . steps, Guido was last	*as B*
223	he	*as A*	folk
268	Decollated by way	Decollate by mere due	*as B*
273	Nor its . . . thereby	Thereby, nor its . . .	*as B*
290	On the next	On next	*as B*
294 } 308	folks	*as A*	folk
321	but	*as A*	best
348	folks	*as A*	folk
373	of	at	*as B*
385	The	*as A*	I'm
409	I	*as A*	Who
445	man	stoic	stone
451	shows, have	show which	*as B*
488	and	*as A*	so
499	man, so, blind	*as A*	man born blind
512	So	*as A*	Thus
521	held the	*as A*	now held
527	be	*as A*	brood
535	Be	Are	*as B*
537	Is	*as A*	Lies
538	lo, a cockatrice	*as A*	lurks a centipede
543	pass	*as A*	judge
546	Was deemed	*as A*	That seemed
547	lays	*as A*	laid
548	lets the world see the	*as A*	let the world perceive
550	stand	*as A*	stood
555	fame pearl-pure	*as A*	pearl-pure fame
556	In	*as A*	By
559	Would thence-forth make	*as A*	Which thence-forth makes
560	that's	*as A*	souls'
561	For	*as A*	Since
590	leave	*as A*	let
607	*See* '*Lines added*'	607-9 *See* '*Lines added*'	607-9 *as B*; *but substitutes* Should learn *for* Now learns

A	B	C
608 the worn, who	610 *as A*	610 worn, who haply
610 glide	612 glides	612 *as B*
611 Bare feet, coarse robe and rope-girt waist of mine	613 With these bare feet, coarse robe and rope-girt waist	613 *as B*
613 *See 'Lines added'*	615-16 *See 'Lines added'*	615-16 *as B*
621 some	624 much	624 *as B*
622 dream would	625 doubt would	625 doubt will
— *See 'Lines added'*	626 *See 'Lines added'*	626 *as B*
626 great, in fine	630 good and great	630 *as B*
630 May well be	634 Of life are	634 *as B*
641 the	645 my	645 *as B*
642 the	646 my	646 *as B*
647 Else had he turned	651 Nor stoops to turn	651 *as B*
650 —So rounded	654 —So, rounding	654 And so round
657 the liars	661 *as A*	661 earth's liars
662 so much	666 froth and	666 *as B*
666 True	670 The	670 *as B*
671 where	675 what's	675 *as B*
675 paul	679 *as A*	679 piece
684 to end	688 *as A*	688 which ends
689 Station	693 Place her	693 *as B*
724 Is turned into	728 Turn into quite	728 *as B*
725 first of all	729 *as A*	729 first
726 And	730 Which	730 *as B*
770 accounts	774 account	774 *as B*
777 There	781 If	781 *as B*
784 to	788 of	788 *as B*
785 men's	789 all	789 *as B*
787 of crime	791 o' the crime	791 *as B*
788 caused such urgency to cure	792 could have caused such urgency	792 *as B*
789 The mob, just then, of chronic	793 To cure the mob, just then, of	793 *as B*
801 her	805 the	805 *as B*
804 stern History	808 the annalist	808 *as B*
805 Trust rather to	809 Go rather by	809 *as B*
814 one	818 I	818 *as B*
817 Of bearing	821 Which bore the	821 *as B*
— Book	— page	— *as B*
861 the Andante	865 *as A*	865 e'en Beethoven

It will be observed that a large proportion of the changes made, including all the added lines, occur in the report of Fra Celestino's sermon (459-642 in A); see Introduction to Book XII.

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